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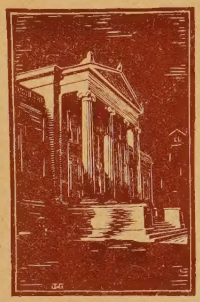

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The Character of Paul

THE CHARACTER OF PAUL

BY

CHARLES EDWARD JEFFERSON

PASTOR OF BROADWAY TABERNACLE

NEW YORK CITY

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INTRODUCTION

THIS is a book of sermons, although the sermons have never been preached. I find that my mind, as I grow older, can create more sermons than it is possible for me to preach. Ever since the appearance of my volume of sermons on "The Character of Jesus" some fifteen years ago, it has been my intention to publish, sometime, a companion volume on "The Character of Paul." For over thirty years, Paul has been one of my favorite heroes. Through all that time, I have lived with him almost constantly. For thirteen years of my life, I made it my practice each succeeding year to carry away with me for the summer one of his letters and make it my special study. Through my vacation months he was my daily companion. I read the letter again and again. I read everything of value on the letter which I could find, meditated on its contents, pondered the problems it suggested, communed with the spirit of the man who wrote it, prepared a sermon on it, and finally made out a list of a hundred questions for the assistance of my people in their study of it through the following year. In this way Paul became to me more and more a living man. I

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feel I know him better than I know any other man who ever lived. I began these chapters in the year 1916, but the great War then in progress was distracting, and since the war, the pressure of my work has made it impossible till now to carry out my purpose. I now at last have given shape to material which for several years has been lying in my mind. I have written for preachers, that they may be quickened to speak of Paul more frequently to their people, and also for laymen that they may be encouraged to study Paul's letters for themselves, and find in him an unfailing source of strength and gladness.

September 1, 1923.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
INTRODUCTION	. . . . .	v
CHAPTER		
I.	THE MAN	1
II.	WHAT WE KNOW AND WHAT WE DO NOT KNOW	15
III.	HIS LIMITATIONS	29
IV.	AS SEEN BY HIS CONTEMPORARIES	43
V.	HIS SINCERITY	57
VI.	HIS SANITY	73
VII.	HIS WEAKNESS	87
VIII.	HIS STRENGTH	101
IX.	HIS PRIDE	117
X.	HIS HUMILITY	133
XI.	HIS VEHEMENCE	147
XII.	HIS PATIENCE	159
XIII.	HIS COURAGE	173
XIV.	HIS COURTESY	187
XV.	HIS INDIGNATION	201
XVI.	HIS TENDERNESS	215
XVII.	HIS BREADTH AND NARROWNESS .	229
XVIII.	HIS SYMPATHY	245

CHAPTER		PAGE
XIX.	His Thankfulness	259
XX.	His Joyfulness	275
XXI.	His Trustfulness	291
XXII.	His Hopefulness	307
XXIII.	His Love	321
XXIV.	His Religiousness	337
XXV.	His Lovableness	353
XXVI.	His Greatness	367

I

THE MAN

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I

THE MAN

I PURPOSE to paint the portrait of Paul. It is not my aim to tell the story of his life, but to sketch the features of his soul. I am not concerned just now with his ideas but with his disposition, not with his doctrines but with his habitual moods, not with his system of thought but with his character. Character is a medium of revelation. We err when we imagine that Deity can speak to men only through the operation of the intellect. God speaks also through human conduct. Moral traits are an organ through which the Eternal discloses his character and purpose. We learn what heaven would have of us by what great men do and suffer. It is the personality of Paul and not his theology with which we in these chapters have to do. What Jesus said to men when he faced them in his highest mood was not "Believe this" or "Accept that," but "Follow me!" And Paul when he was at his highest, did not press upon men a theory of the fall of man, or an exposition of the death of Jesus, but poured out his soul in the fervent exhortation, "I beseech you

be ye imitators of me." "Be ye imitators of me, even as also I am of Christ." "The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do." We commonly speak of the Epistles of Paul, but Paul himself is an Epistle, and ought to be known and read of all men.

But Paul is little known. The average Christian is not acquainted with him. He is a name in a book, but not a living man. He is a shadow flitting to and fro in the pale realms of theological discussion, but he has no blood in him. He is a statue on a pedestal, but not a helper of men in their daily needs. He is remote from the Christian heart. He is not so popular as Gideon and David, he is not so well liked as Peter and John. He could be the best known of all the Apostles, for we have more information concerning him than of any of the rest of them, but he remains almost a stranger to us. He could be better known to us than any other man of antiquity except Cicero, if we would only make diligent use of the sources of knowledge within our reach. He has much to give us, but alas we do not know him.

For this, the scholars are in part to blame. They have so hedged the Apostle in by piles of learned rubbish that a layman can hardly get at him. Thousands of books have been written about Paul, and most of them are learned. It seems well-nigh impossible to write about him without

weighting the book down with erudition. By a learned book, I mean a book with a long preface containing an extended list of authorities consulted, with footnotes at the bottom of every page, with quotations from many quarters woven into the body of the text, with frequent references to volumes which the ordinary mortal has never heard of, with constant allusions to various mysterious things which render Paul still more of an enigma, with an excursus at the end of every chapter into which has been mopped up the overflow of critical ingenuity, and with a series of appendices at the end of the book dealing with disputed points and setting forth clashing interpretations. This is the kind of book which one has come to expect when he takes up a volume on Paul.

It seems impossible to write about him without becoming philosophical. No matter who the writer is, he is almost sure to discuss Paul's rank in the history of religion, or in the evolution of Christianity, or if he does not do this, he will discuss Paul's relation to Judaism or Pharisaism or Gnosticism or Mysticism or Stoicism, or Neoplatonism, or if he does not do this, he will write voluminously on "Paulinism." It is far easier evidently to write on Paulinism than on Paul. Even the biographers of Paul became so learnedly prolix that the average reader can do little with them. Instead of writing about Paul they fill

their pages with descriptions of the countries through which he traveled, and with the history of the cities in which he preached. They start with Paul, but immediately glide into geography or archeology or paleontology, in whose depths the ordinary reader is overwhelmed. What space is left is devoted to the exegesis of the letters, and to problems of chronology, and to questions of authenticity and glosses and redactions, so that one comes away from the reading of a Life of Paul exhausted.

There was a certain coppersmith in the first century who did Paul much evil. In the 19th and 20th centuries it is not the coppersmiths who have wrought the mischief, but the learned specialists and the erudite experts and the scholarly commentators and the ingenious theologians. These men have covered him over with such a mass of interpretation and speculation and multifarious learning, that the average man cannot find him. Paul has become the specialty of the scholars, and not the hero of the common people.

And so I am determined not to be learned, although I am immensely indebted to the patient and laborious investigations of scores of specialists and scholars, without whose assistance this book could never have been written. I do not write of Paul the Theologian, or Paul the Philosopher, or Paul the Metaphysician, or Paul the Logician, or Paul the Mystic, or Paul the Roman

Citizen, or Paul the Traveler, or Paul the Orator, or Paul the Ecclesiastic, or Paul the Statesman, or Paul the Missionary, or Paul the Apostle, or Paul the Pastor and Teacher, but Paul the Man. I do not write even of "Saint Paul." Let us for a time drop the word "Saint." It is to some a repellent word—a sort of verbal veil over the face of the man who wears it. It digs a gulf between the man who has it, and the man who knows that he has no claim to sainthood. Let us sweep away the barriers and get rid of all the chasms. My aim is to bring Paul near. My desire is to bring him so near that you can feel his heart-beat, and hear him breathe.

Because Paul is not known, he is not liked. To like a man we must know him. It is the men we love who help us most. If Paul does not help us, it is because we do not love him. We reverence him, some of us, but we do not give him our heart. Some of us dislike him because we misunderstand him. It is our ignorance which builds barriers between him and us. Some of us became prejudiced against him in childhood. The dullest book in the house was a book on the Doctrines of Paul. The dryest of all the Pastor's sermons were connected with Paul. When we dipped into his letters we liked him still less, for we found such words as foreordination and predestination and justification and sanctification and edification and damnation. Who could win the heart of a

child with such a vocabulary as that? To many a child, Paul is a sort of holy ogre, dwelling in a world into which children cannot go. When we grew older we liked him still less, for we found out that he returned a runaway slave, and commanded women to keep still in church meetings. He seemed to be the friend of slave owners, and the enemy of the rights of woman. Later on his name became a synonym of theological bigotry and rancor. It suggested controversy and things hard to understand. We discovered on reading history that this man's words have been in every generation food for the fanatic, and a battle ax in the hands of tyrants. Theologians have used his letters as an arsenal from which they have snatched weapons to beat down their opponents. And thus his name came to have the odor of bigotry and the tang of despotism. It was linked in our mind with the tragedy of dogma and the fury of theological debate. We held him accountable for all that the tyrants quoting his words have attempted, and for all that the bigots relying on his authority have done. He was responsible—so it seemed to us—for not a little of the confusion and bitterness which have plagued and disgraced the Christian Church.

This estimate of the man was due to our limited knowledge. We judged him largely by hearsay, and did not go straight to the man himself. To a great part of the Western World, Paul is

known chiefly through John Calvin, and it must be confessed that the Calvinized Paul is far from lovable. If you would ever understand Paul, then close Calvin's Institutes, and open your New Testament. When Renan said that the reign of Paul is coming to an end, he referred to the Paul of John Calvin. The French Scholar was right. The reign of the Calvinized Paul is indeed coming to an end. The Calvinistic interpretation of the Christian religion is outgrown. It is not true to the fundamental conceptions either of Jesus or Paul. Its final disappearance is certain. But the reign of the Paul of the New Testament is not coming to an end. It is just beginning. The reign of Paul the Theologian, who appears in the pages of Calvinistic theologians is ending, but the reign of the Paul who wrote the letter to the Philippians is just dawning. Paul the man is now for the first time coming to his own. He has been through all the centuries the unknown Apostle. The coming generation will do him a justice hitherto denied him. "Back to Jesus" was a slogan which rang clear and strong across the 19th century world. "Back to Paul" is a cry which will go sounding through the century in which we are now living. We must get back of the commentators, and back of the exegetes, back of the theologians of every school, back of John Wesley and John Calvin and John Knox, back of Augustine and the early fathers, back to Paul

himself. He is his own best interpreter. We must read his doctrines in the light of his life. We must interpret his theology with our eye on his character. In him the Spirit of Christ was incarnate in an extraordinary degree. The life of the Son of God was made manifest in his flesh. He supplements in his afflictions—as he himself asserts—the sufferings of the world's Savior, and he also supplements in his attitude and disposition, his outlook and spirit, Christ's revelation of God. The New Testament holds before our eyes the figures of two men—Jesus and Paul. Other men are there, but they are all in the background. At the center of the picture stands Jesus the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, and near him stands the man who above all others had the character of the Son in whom God is well pleased.

It is one of the tragedies of history that this man is not better known. We need him. The world has grown weary of dogmas and creeds. It has no inclination today to listen to anyone who discusses foreknowledge and predestination or the Man of Sin. It craves manhood. It prizes character. Men are everywhere bewildered and discouraged and disillusioned. They need the vision of a man who struggled and suffered and conquered. Many are despondent and cynical. They cry—"Who will show us any good?" They need the light of the countenance of a man who was dedicated to goodness. The modern mind

is skeptical as to the power of the Christian religion. It concedes that the principles of Jesus are beautiful, but it is not sure that his way of life is practicable. It insists that human nature is human nature, and that it cannot be changed, that men must always be essentially what they have been and still are. We need to keep before us a specimen of human nature in which the spirit of Christ has done a conspicuously victorious work. We need an arresting example of what is possible under the sway of Christian ideals. Paul is an answer to the sneer that a man cannot be radically changed. He is an uncontestable proof that what Christ promised can be fulfilled. The whole church would be quickened and energized if only this man should become a living force in the brain and heart of professing Christians. Our whole civilization would receive a fresh impetus and brighter tone if it should come into closer contact with this spiritual dynamo, this man who found by experience that he could do all things through Christ.

How then can we know him? We can know him through the Book of the Acts and through his thirteen Epistles. These do not give us enough to write his life, but they furnish sufficient data for us to know his soul. How shall we begin? Much depends on the beginning. Many have started, but soon stopped because they did not begin at the right place. They be-

gan with the letter to the Romans, the worst possible point to begin if one wants to make Paul's acquaintance. The letter to the Romans stands at the head of the Pauline letters, because it is the longest and because it was written to the Church in the world's metropolis. But it is the last letter which any one ought to read. One should begin with the letter at the bottom of the list—the letter to Philemon. It is only a note written to an intimate friend on a delicate matter, and is therefore peculiarly revealing. If you are interested in Paulinism, read Romans. If you would know Paul read Philemon. After Philemon read Philippians, a letter written to a group of friends—his first European converts. It overflows with affection. It drips with feeling. Its abandon is delightful, its naïveté is bewitching. When you read this letter you know you are in the presence of a gentleman. After Philippians, read his second letter to the Corinthians, the most autobiographic of all Paul's letters. It is crammed with information concerning the Apostle's life, and in it he lays bare his heart in a way which is unparalleled elsewhere in Scripture. He is defending himself against the unjust and cruel accusations of his enemies. He writhes in agony, and in his anguish he says things which only an innocent man in torture would dare to utter. In Philippians Paul reveals himself to his friends, in Second Corinthians he reveals him-

self to his foes. These two pictures should hang side by side in the gallery of our memory. Next read his Second letter to Timothy. This is the last of his letters which have been preserved. It was written in prison, with the prospect of death staring him in the face, to the man who was the dearest to him of any person in the world, so near that he seemed more like a son than a friend. If we would know the inmost soul of Paul, we must not neglect his second letter to his son. These four constitute the great Pauline quadrilateral. After you have read these four letters again and again, you will be ready to read the account of Paul's doings given by his friend Luke. The last twenty chapters of the Book of the Acts, with the exception of chapters ten, eleven, and twelve, are almost exclusively devoted to a series of pictures setting forth experiences of Paul. The story is compressed and there are many gaps, but the writer sometimes by a single sentence lights up Paul as by a flash of lightning. For an instant he stands before us startlingly vivid, and we see as in the light of heaven what manner of man he was. After repeated readings of the Book of the Acts, let the student read Galatians and then I Timothy and then Titus, and then I Corinthians. The remaining five letters—I and II Thessalonians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Romans can be reserved for the last. All thirteen letters are trustworthy. You can depend upon them to the

utmost. We shall not waste any time on alleged discrepancies, and contradictions, on variations and dissimilarities, nor shall we vex ourselves with the controversies over his style, nor shall we turn aside to puzzle our heads over questions of chronology, nor shall we weary ourselves with wrestling with the score of different interpretations which have been placed upon nearly every line which Paul ever wrote. None of these things are of interest to us in our quest. We want to know Paul, and the power of his victorious life, and the fellowship of his sufferings, that we also like him may lay hold on that for which also we were laid hold on by Christ Jesus

II

WHAT WE KNOW AND WHAT WE DO NOT KNOW

II

WHAT WE KNOW AND WHAT WE DO NOT KNOW

It is one thing to know and another thing not to know, and the distinction between them should be kept sharp and vivid. Our ignorance has a fashion of slipping down into the realm of our knowledge and becoming confounded with it. If we think we know what we do not know, we deceive ourselves and become muddled in our thinking. The world is full of confusion because men persist in jumbling facts and fancies.

When men do not know what they desire to know and cannot know, they seek relief in conjecture. A large part of the alleged knowledge of the world is surmise and speculation. In trying to make the acquaintance of Paul, we must rigorously separate what we know from what men have guessed. Conjectures are sometimes innocent and sometimes they are mischievous. Some conjectures do not warp the mind or darken the heart, other conjectures set the mind on a wrong track and so prejudice the heart that it becomes impossible to arrive at a fair conclusion.

We must be constantly on our guard against these disturbing and damaging conjectures. When, for instance, Renan speaks of Paul as an "ugly little Jew," he is guessing. He did not know that Paul was little, nor did he know that he was ugly. Nobody knows that. Nobody can ever know. Renan was a scholar of distinction, and therefore, like many another scholar, he took liberties. He was not careful to confine himself to demonstrated truth. He wove his imagination into all he wrote. He did not like Paul, and so he called him "little and ugly." In that way he knew he would induce others to dislike him also.

Others have guessed that Paul was little, and they have based their guesses on the fact that the people of Lystra took him for the god Mercury. But Luke is careful to tell us why they took Paul for that god. It was because he was the chief speaker. They were not thinking of the size of the man, but of the power of his tongue. It is commonly assumed that Barnabas was large and majestic, because he was taken for Jupiter. But it may be that it was because he looked wise and said nothing.

Another reason for thinking Paul was little is the remark of his enemies in Corinth—"His bodily presence is weak." But this does not necessarily apply to his stature. A tall man might be weak in the way the Corinthians suggested, even though he weighed two hundred pounds. Paul's

enemies were twitting him on the fact that at a distance he could roar like a lion, but that when he was close at hand he was as harmless as a lamb. Both his physique and his speech were impotent, when he came to deal with men face to face. So they said. It is not safe to build a large conclusion on the taunt of a man's foes, especially when we cannot be sure of what the taunt really means. The Corinthian slanderers were probably thinking of his personality and not of his body at all.

A third reason for conjecturing that Paul was little is a novel written in the second or third century, entitled "Acts of Paul and Thekla." In this tale there is a pen portrait of Paul, the only early one in existence. This portrait makes him "small in size, with meeting eyebrows, with a rather large nose, baldheaded, bow-legged, strongly built, full of grace, for at times he looked like a man, and at times he had the face of an angel." This is interesting but not reliable. A story written two or three hundred years after a man's death is hardly a safe source from which to draw material concerning his personal appearance. If Paul looked as this novel says he looked, it is surprising that the Lystrians took him for a god, for the Greek gods were all graceful and well formed. Imagine a bow-legged god!

Let us face the fact. We know nothing at all of Paul's appearance. No one in the first cen-

tury sketched him with pen or painted him with brush. Later generations painted him, but their work is the work of the imagination. You can think of him therefore as you wish. Raphael painting him on Mars' Hill, made him a man of commanding presence. Why not? The right to guess is one of the inalienable rights with which all men are endowed.

We know Paul had a physical malady. He calls it "a thorn in the flesh." What it was, nobody knows, and nobody will ever know. For nearly two thousand years men have been guessing as to the nature of the thorn, and they will no doubt keep on guessing to the end of time. The list of guesses is imposing: Epilepsy, ophthalmia, headache, toothache, stones, hemorrhoids, melancholia, leprosy, neurasthenia, malarial fever, hysteria, and many others. In certain quarters it is assumed that his ailment was epilepsy, and this is promulgated by learned men and erudite physicians as a fact. On the contrary, it is nothing but a guess, and a stupid guess at that. Medical men often guess—and badly. If Paul had epilepsy, it was a unique form of that disease, and it is a pity the world has not more epileptics of Paul's particular species. It is easy to say that a man was an epileptic after he has been in his grave several hundred years. It is often asserted that Julius Cæsar and Mohammed and Charles V. and Cromwell and Napoleon I. were all epi-

leptics, but there is no solid ground for any such assertion. There is no satisfactory reason for thinking that any one of those men was an epileptic. It is one of those speculations which are repeated so many times that the world comes at last to accept them as established facts. If Paul was an epileptic, then his vision near the Damascus gate was a delusion, and thus we can get rid of one of the most formidable witnesses for the truth of the Christian religion. But Paul's epilepsy is a guess. Christianity will never be demolished by a guess.

It is also a guess that Paul was a chronic invalid. Benjamin Jowett was a scholar, but he did not know enough to warrant him in picturing Paul as "a poor decrepit being afflicted perhaps with palsy, the creature, as he seemed to spectators, of nervous sensibility." This is mere fancy, and can be pushed aside as both impertinent and worthless. The man who could endure the hardships and tribulations described in the Second Letter to the Corinthians was no puny, shambling invalid, but a man of extraordinary physical equipment, endowed with amazing powers of bodily endurance, a Christian Samson, giving exhibition of physical stamina unique in the annals of mankind. Compute the number of miles he traveled, and take into account the character of the roads, the nature of the regions through which he made his way, the dangers and

fatigue and privations inseparable from travel in the first century, and you must feel you are standing in the presence of a Hercules, one of the toughest fibered heroes of our race.

It is claimed that Paul had sore eyes. There are only two reasons for suspecting he had anything the matter with his eyes. One is that he did not recognize the High Priest at the trial at which that dignitary ordered a bystander to strike Paul on the mouth, and the second, the remark of Paul in his letter to the Galatians that "if possible ye would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me." The first incident proves nothing. A man is not necessarily blear eyed or short sighted because he does not recognize a man whom one would have supposed he would recognize. Paul had been long absent from Jerusalem, and there is no evidence that he had known Annas or had ever seen him. It is not certain that at this meeting of the Council, the High Priest had on his official robes. Moreover, we cannot be certain of the meaning of Paul's words —"I knew not that he was High Priest!" Possibly this was sarcasm. Paul was in the mood in which it is easy to be sarcastic, and it may be he meant—"Who could have supposed that a ruffian giving such an atrocious order was a High Priest?" That the Galatians would have given Paul their eyes does not prove that he had opthalmia. When one is ardently fond of another

person, he says he would give him even his eyes. That expresses the top notch of devotion. When Farrar pictures Paul as so weak and ailing that he had to be passively conducted from place to place, and declares it was almost impossible for him to get through the ordinary routine of life without companions to guide and protect and lead him by the hand, he is the victim of an audacious imagination. It may be that Paul had defective eyesight, but we do not know it. Luke evidently did not know it either. He tells us how Paul fastened his eyes on the Sorcerer Elymas, and how he fastened his eyes on a cripple at Lystra. He could apparently strike terror and inspire hope by his look. When Paul faced the Council in Jerusalem, Luke was impressed by Paul's use of his eyes. "He looked steadfastly on the Council." He awed them by his glance.

Was Paul married? If he was, did his wife leave him when he became a Christian, or did she die? We do not know. There is no evidence which is conclusive. All answers are nothing but conjectures.

Did Paul see Jesus in the flesh? It is impossible to answer. Speculation has been especially active at this point, but the most positive and best buttressed answer is nothing but a guess.

Did Paul write the Pastoral Epistles? It is a fashion in certain circles to say no. When men say he did not write them, they are guessing.

When it is said that in their present form they are not Paul's work, but that in them one finds undoubtedly genuine Pauline material, that also is a guess. No man now alive knows enough to pick out of the Pastoral Epistles, the Pauline sentences from those written by another pen. All such alleged learning is only guesswork. For my part, I guess that Paul wrote all the three Pastoral Epistles. I have earned my right to guess by reading everything of importance published on the question within the last fifty years, and by living with the Apostle on intimate terms summer and winter, day and night for more than a third of a century. I may be pardoned for claiming the right to say I know him. I know his accent, his intonations, his overtones and his undertones, his subtle mannerisms, and the flavor of his individuality. Because I know him, I am sure he wrote the Pastoral Epistles. It is just as certain to me that he wrote them as it is that he did not write the letter to the Hebrews. I will put up my guess against the guess of the boldest and most learned of all the experts who declare he did not write them. When men throw away the Pastoral Epistles, they act on a guess which is without foundation. It is the fashion just now to dispute them, but it is a fashion, I doubt not, which will pass.

It is often said that Paul was devoid of the sense of humor, that he had no love of Nature,

that he was not fond of children, that he was totally indifferent to the feelings of animals, and that he had no appreciation of art. All these are inferences more or less capricious, drawn by ambitious theorists from the scanty and fragmentary material in our possession. It did not lie within the scope of Luke's purpose to tell what Paul liked and what he did not like, nor was it possible for Paul to show everything within him in thirteen short letters written on high and serious spiritual themes. There was in these letters no excuse for humor, no room for descriptions of natural scenery, no justification for raving over art, and no call for an expression of affection either for animals or for children. The argument from silence is the most precarious of all arguments. We have no right to judge a man by what he does not say on subjects unrelated to the matter which he has in hand. It may be that Paul was blind to the glories of nature, and indifferent to the beauty of art, but we do not know it. Let us not condemn him on a mere conjecture. It is possible he could not laugh, and that his sense of humor was undeveloped, but we cannot accuse him of this. We do not know enough.

Was he versed in Greek learning? Had he a wide knowledge of Greek poetry and philosophy and history? We do not know. Because he gives us three quotations from foreign poets,

we cannot conclude he was familiar with the whole literature of Greece and Crete. Almost any one can quote poets whose lines have gotten into the air and become the common possession of mankind. When Paul wrote his letters he was not dealing with Greek philosophy or verse, and hence we cannot tell whether his literary education had been liberal or narrow. When men call him an ignoramus outside the field of rabbinical learning, they are simply guessing, and when he is given credit for extensive classical culture, that also is a guess. Why not be candid and confess we do not know?

Was Paul domineering? Many persons dislike him because he was. But how do they know? Certain scholars have decided that he was. But how did they find out? "Domineering" is an unlovely word, and one should not use it unless he is certain of his ground. It has been claimed that Paul was domineering because he differed from Barnabas in the taking of John Mark on the second missionary journey. But was he? Is every man domineering who differs from another man in judgment? Cannot a man have an opinion which differs from the opinion of a friend without being guilty of manifesting a domineering spirit? Nobody knows whether Paul was in the right or in the wrong. We do not possess all the facts. We lack the data which would justify us in passing judgment. There is no more rea-

son for thinking Paul was in the wrong than for thinking Barnabas was in the right. We are better able to judge of Paul's wisdom than we are of that of Barnabas, for the reason that Paul's judgment is put to the test oftener in the New Testament, and the fact that Paul so frequently shows himself a man of superior wisdom, should make one cautious about condemning him for his decision against John Mark. That Paul showed an ugly and tyrannical spirit in deciding that John Mark lacked the qualifications for rendering effective service on that particular journey is only a conjecture, and it is of such a flimsy character that no reliable conclusion can be built upon it. That Paul was domineering is a surmise of persons who do not like him.

It is amazing how little we know of Paul's life, and yet how much we know of his character. We know he was born in Tarsus, but we do not know the name or the character of either his father or his mother. We do not know whether he had brothers or whether he had more than the one sister mentioned by Luke. He himself never makes any reference to any member of his family. We know the name of only one of his teachers—"Gamaliel." We know nothing of the first 35 years of his life. Jesus in his first 30 years speaks once. Paul does not speak at all. After his conversion, there is almost a total blank of twelve years. From this on through 17 years we

get swift and isolated glimpses of him in the Acts and in the letters, but when the curtain goes down at the end of the Book of the Acts, we are left in the dark.

Tradition says he was beheaded outside the City of Rome, two miles southward from the Ostian gate. We know that a centurion and a detachment of the praetorian guard went with him accompanied by a rabble. What friends, if any, went with him, we do not know. What did they say? What was his last word? No one can tell. We do not know when he was born—either the day or the month or the year. We do not know when he died, either the year or the month or the day. A church stands on the spot where tradition says he died—the Church of the Three Fountains. A church also stands on the spot where tradition says he was buried, the Church of St. Paul's without the walls. His biography can never be written. We do not know enough. His character is as clear as the sun.

III

HIS LIMITATIONS

III

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Men call him a Saint, but he was far from perfect. No saint is free from faults. The world calls him holy, but he was not altogether whole. He had defects, flaws, blemishes. Our New Testament paints its heroes, warts and all. Of Jesus it is said that "he hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Paul was also tempted like as we are, and like us he fell. He is our brother in transgression.

There is a vast chasm between Jesus and Paul. Jesus never confesses sin, never shows a trace of remorse or even regret. Jesus was never ashamed, never cried out for forgiveness. We see Paul again and again with his mouth in the dust. "I am not worthy to be called an Apostle," so Paul said. "I am the Son of God," said Jesus. "I am less than the least of all saints," said Paul. "One is your Master, and all ye are brethren," said Jesus. "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" asked Jesus. "I am the chief of sinners," exclaimed Paul. Nobody in Paul's presence feels like crying, "Depart from me for

I am a sinful man." On the other hand we cling to him, and join in his confession—"The good which I would I do not, but the evil which I would not that I practice." Near the end of his life Paul wrote to his Philippian friends—"I am not already made perfect, but I press on. I count not myself yet to have laid hold, but I press on toward the goal." He is not in Jesus' class; he is in our class. His shortcomings bring him near to us. His blunders knit us to him. He helps us in ways in which Jesus cannot help. We need two examples, a sinless man, and a sinner who has repented. We need the inspiration of a man who never fell, and the encouragement of a man who fell and got up again. A perfect man reveals what the ideal is, a man defeated and finally victorious discloses what by God's grace we may ultimately become. The sinfulness of Paul as well as the sinlessness of Jesus has a part to play in our redemption. We need Jesus on one side of us and Paul on the other, if we are to walk in triumph along the difficult and perilous way. This does not rob Jesus of his supreme place, for Paul is all the time saying that it is not he who is overcoming, but Christ who is living in him. We need the power of Christ mediated to us in two forms, in the form of the Word made incarnate, and in the form of a man of like passions and failures with ourselves.

Because Paul fell and came short of the glory of God, we must not expect of him all that we find in Jesus. We must not demand an unerring judgment, only a sinless man can possess that. We must not look for infallible opinions, only a man who never sinned can have those. If Paul falls below the ideal in disposition and conduct, we must not be surprised that he also falls short of the ideal in his thinking and teaching. Why should we shrink from acknowledging his limitations when he himself was so ready to confess them? Why make claims for him which he never made for himself? When men put him on the same level with Jesus, and claim for every one of his words an authority equal to that of the words of the Son of God, they take a position which cannot be successfully defended, and which Paul himself would be the first to repudiate. "Who then is Paul?" he was wont to say to admirers who exalted him to a place which was not rightfully his. Why claim for him a perfection which he did not possess, and attribute to him infallibility when his errors are written large before our eyes? When certain enthusiasts at Lystra wanted to worship him as a god, he protested with vigor and drew back in horror. He wanted no prostrations before him. All that he claimed was that on essential points he had the mind of Christ, and that the ambition of his life was to be faithful to him.

"Every man," says Lowell, "is the prisoner of his date," and Paul is no exception. No man can escape entirely the limitations of his generation. His historic environment leaves marks upon him which cannot be effaced. In his letter to the Galatians, Paul uses an argument which to us is no argument at all. He asserts that when the promise was made to Abraham and his seed, the fact that the word "seed" is singular, shows that the promise could not refer to the Jewish people, but must refer to Christ. To us such reasoning is puerile, but it was not puerile to Paul, because he had been educated in the Rabbinical school, and that is the way the Rabbis argued. Moreover, the people were accustomed to such argumentation, and when a man wishes to convince his audience, he must make use of an instrument which grips their mind. This argument does not grip our mind, but it probably gripped the minds of those to whom it was addressed. Rabbinical exegesis has been outgrown. We smile at it. Future generations may laugh at ours. Later on, he makes use of the story of Hagar and Ishmael, and after the fashion of the Rabbis, allegorizes it. Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and the free woman is the Jerusalem which is above. All such interpretation is to us fantastic, but it was not fantastic to Paul, because he had been in college at Jerusalem, and that is the way college professors interpreted

Scripture in those days. In his use of the Old Testament, Paul was the prisoner of his date.

Paul was powerfully impressed by a school of authors, much in vogue in the first century, who wrote apocalypses. These men proclaimed with passionate assurance, that God was on the point of manifesting his power in some miraculous and overwhelming way. There were words of Jesus which seemed to fall in with the apocalyptic way of thinking, and Paul's vehement and fiery nature made him especially responsive to the apocalyptic outlook. Christ's conception of God as a tender and sympathetic father made it easy for his followers to believe that the world as it then was could not long continue. How could a God of wisdom and compassion allow mankind to remain in such a welter of misery and corruption? Surely a social order that had grown irretrievably rotten was ripe for the burning. The hardships and tribulations of Christians drove them to the Apocalyptic vision. It was their chief solace in the day of their suffering. Without this to sustain them, they could scarcely have endured. Paul himself comforted his heart by the expectation of the speedy coming of Jesus, and he comforted others by inspiring in them the same hope. To the Thessalonians he wrote, "We say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise

precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Nothing could be clearer than that. If that does not say that Jesus is coming in a visible and miraculous manner in Paul's own lifetime, then language has no meaning. The same conviction is expressed with emphasis in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians: "Behold I tell you a mystery. We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." The meaning of this is indisputable. To the Romans he wrote, "The day is at hand." To the Philippians he wrote, "The Lord is at hand." Such language can have but one meaning. When Peter wrote, "The end of all things is at hand," he expressed not only his own conviction but that of Paul and of all the other Apostles. The early church lived in the ardent expectation of the early ending of the world. Here then is a solid fact which cannot be evaded. This fact raises certain questions which must be answered. Can an Apostle be mistaken? Yes, Paul was.

Can a man be inspired and hold erroneous notions? Yes, Paul was inspired and knew only in part as he himself confessed. Can the New Testament be authoritative and contain errors? Yes, the New Testament contains errors, and at the same time speaks with authority on all matters essential to our salvation. How can an honest man say that the New Testament is an inerrant book? Why not face the fact? What is in jeopardy? Nothing but the traditional definition of inspiration. When facts make havoc of inherited definitions, those definitions must be altered. The only precious thing in danger is the Church's reputation for honesty and candor. The cause of truth can never be advanced by men who dare not face the facts. It is disheartening that even in our day there are men of intelligence and noble purpose who refuse to admit that Paul was mistaken, and who stand on tiptoe eagerly anticipating the immediate fulfilment of his words. Rather than surrender an untenable theory of inspiration they are willing to shut their eyes to the experience of sixty generations. Through 1900 years the Holy Spirit has been testifying in human experience that Paul and all the other Apostles held and taught ideas of the end of the world which were mistaken, but now as in the days of Stephen, there are devout and honored men who do always resist the Holy Spirit.

One error usually leads to another. Because Paul was mistaken in regard to the coming of Christ, much that he says in regard to marriage is mischievous. Paul disparaged marriage. He did not claim it was sinful, but he advised men not to marry unless they were so passionate that they could not safely live alone. He advised fathers not to give their daughters in marriage. All such advice was due to his conviction that the time was short. Why think of marriage when the end of all things was at hand? Why should a Christian entangle himself with domestic responsibilities, and increase his sorrows by bringing upon a woman the sufferings which a confession of Christ involved, when the old order was to give place so soon to the new? Why burden oneself with domestic cares, when there was scarcely time enough to prepare oneself for the great change? When our premise is mistaken, our conclusion is sure to be wrong. Paul was wrong in much that he wrote about marriage, and the harm he has done at this point cannot be measured. The advocates of celibacy have in every generation gone to Paul for the sanction of their views. Tender consciences have been tortured, and sacred unions have been jeopardized, and in many cases destroyed, by Paul's misleading advice concerning marriage. We will not forget however, the many sound things he said to husbands and wives, nor will we fail to

remember that late in life, he symbolized the relation between Christ and his Church by the union of husband and wife. Paul never claimed to be infallible in all his opinions and judgments. At the beginning of his paragraph dealing with marriage, he says, "Now concerning unmarried girls, I have no commandment of the Lord: I give you simply my opinion. All I can do is to tell you what I think." At the end of the paragraph, he says, "This is my judgment, and I think that I have the spirit of God." He did not intend that we should take his every opinion as the infallible and unchanging word of the Eternal.

Fallacious occasionally in argument, mistaken sometimes in opinion, unsound now and then in judgment, he was also at times un-Christian in conduct. His temper was hot, and he did not always succeed in keeping it under control. When at his trial in Jerusalem, the High Priest ordered a bystander to slap the prisoner on the mouth, Paul retorted, "God shall smite you, you whited wall." It has been questioned whether this was really a sin. We have so much of this sort of repartee in ourselves, we should be glad to find it declared excusable in a saint. A tongue-lashing is a good thing, we feel, even for a High Priest, when he degenerates into a ruffian. We admire a man who resents an injustice and denounces it with adequate speech. But no matter

what our justification of Paul may be, we know that Paul felt he had done wrong, and immediately apologized. He quoted the Scriptures to his own condemnation. He knew, and we know that in that heated retort, he fell below the level of Jesus. Jesus also once stood before a High Priest, and while standing there, was slapped on the mouth by an officer of the court. But Jesus did not strike back. All he said was, "If I have spoken evil bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" "As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." That is the ideal. Jesus was a lamb, Paul was a lion. When Paul was angry he roared. But he did not roar long. Immediately in the voice of a dove he confessed himself in the wrong and thus showed himself a Christian gentleman.

He had in him the stuff of which bigots are made. Now and then it rings out in his letters. His convictions were so intense that he did not always hold his language within bounds. "Beware of the dogs." So he wrote to the Philippians, having in mind the men who differed from him in conviction. It was not a nice word for a minister of Christ to use, and too often men in holy zeal for God have followed his example. In his letter to the Galatians, he says, "Though we or an angel from heaven should preach unto you any Gospel other than that which we preached

unto you, let him be accursed." On writing that last word, one would have supposed that Paul would have blushed and blotted it out. But it is just the word he wants, and so he writes the whole sentence again to convince his readers that he means just what he says. Paul liked the word "accursed" too well. Our Revisers did not like it, and so they erased it, and wrote down a Greek word—"Anathema." That sounds better, for the harshness is muffled in the music of the Greek syllables. Moreover, many readers do not know what "anathema" means. Paul knew. At the end of his first letter to the Corinthians, he takes the pen from the hand of his amanuensis and writes this: "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be accursed." He wrote it between two lovely sentences. "Salute one another with a holy kiss," and "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you." A thistle burr between two roses, the old bitter weed of Pharisaic intolerance, growing up amid the flowers of the Christian heart. Paul was right when he wrote, "I am not perfect yet!"

IV

AS SEEN BY HIS CONTEMPORARIES

IV

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Most of them did not see him. That is the reason no Greek or Roman of note ever wrote about him. How could they write about a man whom they did not see? The Romans looked upon the Jews as a contankerous set of fanatics, and had no dealings with them. The Roman spirit was incarnate in Gallio, before whom Paul was once brought for trial. Gallio would not allow Paul to speak at all. He said he wanted nothing to do with the case. He had no time for such bickerings and squabblings. The Greeks were so delighted with this speech of the proconsul, that they mobbed the leader of Paul's accusers, beating him before Gallio's very eyes, but the Roman judge took no notice. That was the attitude of Rome, a lordly indifference to all things Jewish, and at times a sour and insolent contempt. Claudias Lysias, a captain in the Roman army stationed in Jerusalem, had keen eyes and ears for all things important, but he had never even heard of Paul. When the Apostle one day fell into his hands, the Roman officer

thought he had captured an Egyptian assassin. The only Roman of high standing who ever heard the Apostle speak—the Procurator Festus —was convinced that Paul was crazy. He was not willing to hear him through, brushing him aside as a poor unfortunate, who had become demented by long brooding over theological distinctions and discussions.

Nor did any Greek of high position ever set his eyes squarely on Paul. The Greeks were so conscious of their culture, that they were blind to all foreigners, especially the Jews. To the Highbrows in Athens, Paul was nothing but a babbler, and as soon as he touched the story of the resurrection, they laughed in his face. Turning on their heels they left him, leaving a sting in his heart which remained through many days. No Greek of renown could waste time on such a man.

So far as the business world took notice of him, he was simply an agitator who was dangerous to vested interests. He swept away the income of a group of men in Philippi, which so enraged them that they succeeded in driving him from the city. In the City of Ephesus, his teaching interfered so disastrously with the trade of a certain class of money-makers, that the leader of them stirred up a riot which caused pandemonium for several hours. It was in the city in which Paul hit business hard, that he was obliged

to fight, as he said, with beasts. There are no men who fight so unscrupulously and fiercely as men whose profits are being cut down. Would you drive a man to fury, then touch his purse.

The two most common accusations brought against the Apostle, were that he was breaking the law of Cæsar, and that he was speaking against Moses. Which one of these charges was put foremost depended entirely upon the time and place. In Thessalonica when the rabble dragged Paul's host before the rulers of the city, the yell was, "These men have turned the world upside down. They are constantly violating the decrees of Cæsar by declaring that some one else called Jesus is King." In Cæsarea where Paul was arraigned before Felix, the prosecuting attorney presented his indictment thus: "We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of insurrections among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, and a man who just now has tried to profane the temple." The Jews standing by, all declared that every count in this indictment was true. Probably no better expression of the Jewish conception of Paul can be found than that which burst from the throats of the leaders of the mob in the temple court on the day Paul was accused of having brought his Ephesian friend Trophimus into the temple: "This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the peo-

ple, and the law, and this place." When Paul arrived in Jerusalem his friends told him what his enemies had been saying, and the gist of it all was that he had been "teaching all the Jews who were living among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, urging them not to circumcise their children, nor to walk after the customs." According to public rumor throughout the whole Jewish world, Paul was a renegade and apostate, a man who was a blasphemer of his father's religion and a traitor to his race. To multitudes in the Gentile world, he was an enemy of civil order, a disturber of the peace, what we would call a communist or anarchist or Bolshevik. He was a man with a red flag. By sensible people he was counted an undesirable citizen—a man to be feared and hated and shunned.

Wherever he went he was hounded by men who were afraid of him, and who did their utmost to bring his work to nothing. They were always saying that he was not an apostle at all —only a pretender and a usurper and that Paul was conscious of this in his own heart, for otherwise he would have accepted a stipend from his converts, and not been willing to earn his living by the work of his own hands. Starting with the assumption that he was a hypocrite and liar, they found it easy to find proof that he was a demagogue and a trickster, always catching people by cunning and deceit. He was a man with-

out principle—an opportunist, a trimmer, a cheat, ready to be all things to all men if only he could enhance his own popularity and feather his own nest. He was double-faced and double-tongued, saying one thing at one time and a contradictory thing at another time, devoid of consistency, and caring only for what would further his own selfish ends. He was a coward, for at a distance he would indulge in big talk, but when you got him face to face he was meek as a lamb and as harmless as a dove. He was a lover of money, and liked to take up collections for the poor, because some of the cash was sure to find its way into his own pocket. He was in the philanthropic business for what he could make out of it. His zeal for poor people in Jerusalem was a camouflage for the vileness of a covetous heart. Furthermore he was a weakling, a man without culture or oratorical power. As a speaker he had no ability. His speech was of no account. Some went so far as to say that his delivery was beneath contempt. These are some of the things which his critics had to say about him. A serious arraignment it is: Impostor—pretender—charlatan—usurper—demagogue—trickster—liar—coward—opportunist—moneygrabber—weakling. What worse things could be said? One is reminded of our Lord's words—"If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?" Many of

these opponents were no doubt pious and honest men. It is amazing what devout and honorable men are sometimes capable of believing and saying. These men believed they were doing God a service, just as Paul believed that he was pleasing God by compelling Christians to blaspheme the name of Jesus. The men who stoned Paul were as devout and honest as the men who stoned Stephen, and the men who stoned Stephen were as religious and conscientious as the men who crucified Jesus. Conservatism and prejudice and party spirit and pride of opinion and stubbornness and vanity and ambition have a strange way of working together with Godly devotion and devout sincerity and pious zeal for the accomplishment of diabolical ends. One can readily see why Paul's enemies arrived at their state of mind and heart. He certainly ignored the plain language of Scripture in regard to circumcision, and he surely paid scant regard to customs made sacred by the observance of a thousand years, and without doubt he brushed aside ordinances as temporary which other men regarded as eternally binding, and took a novel view of the essentials of a truly religious life. It is not strange that he was misunderstood, nor to be wondered at that being misunderstood he should be misrepresented. Being misrepresented, it was inevitable that he should come to be disliked and suspected, and when suspicion and dislike have done

their perfect work, they bring forth hate and lies. Paul's critics had good grounds, they thought, for every charge they brought against him. He was always doing things and saying things which confirmed them in their hostile feelings. It is impossible for one to judge correctly a man who is above him. Paul was so high above the heads of his critics, that we must pity them rather than condemn them. His gentleness, for instance, was to them inexplicable. It seemed to them a form of cowardice. His willingness to give his life to helping others was to them a mystery, as it must be to every one who holds that no one ever does anything except with the expectation of personal profit. His concern for poor people far away was to them a sham, for they had no sympathy, perhaps, with poor people at their very door. Moreover men do not like a turncoat, and that was what Paul was. He was an enemy of Christians, and then in a moment became one himself. He started to Damascus to do one thing, and then turned round and did another. That is a form of fickleness which many men cannot understand or forgive. His enemies were always twitting him on the fact that he was not one of the Twelve, that he had not enjoyed the privileges which had been enjoyed by Peter and John, and that his knowledge of Jesus was of necessity limited, and his teaching of an authority far inferior to theirs. Their criticisms

and faultfindings, even their calumnies and slanders are of great value to us in our study of his character. They enable us to see him as others saw him. What they said was often only perverse imagination, but even slander sometimes throws a light on the man at whom it is cast. What illumination for instance lies in the blistering words men threw at Jesus—"A glutton and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." The vituperation of Paul's enemies is instructive because of what it does not say. There were many sins of which Paul was never accused. Had there been the slightest indication of their presence, they would not have escaped the shafts of the enemy. Then again had it not been for these calumnies and castigations, we should never have known what a great man Paul was. He lived in a storm of abuse and remained sweet. He suffered long and still was kind. He was pelted with cruel criticism, and lashed with lying accusations, but kept right on with his work. He did his utmost to make the world happier and better, and the thanks he got for it even in the capital of his country, was the venomous shout, "Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live!" It is enough that the servant be as his master.

It is noteworthy that the enemies of Paul always wanted to kill him. They hated him so intensely that nothing but his blood would satisfy

them. They loathed him with a detestation that drove them wild. The more than forty men who bound themselves by an oath that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul were representatives of a great multitude who were miserable because Paul was alive. We cannot know a man until we see him suffer. It was a tradition in the early church, that Jesus on calling Paul said, "I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name's sake."

¶ Every man in proportion to his power, attracts or repels the hearts of others. If Paul repelled some men mightily, so did he bind others to him with hoops of steel. If he was one of the most hated of men, so was he one of the most loved. The Galatian Christians adored him and would have dug out their eyes and made him a present of them. The Philippian converts followed him wherever he went with thoughts of affection, and sent him presents again and again. He had friends in Corinth so devoted to him that they were in danger of thinking more about their loyalty to him than to Jesus. Paul was horrified to hear them shouting—"We belong to Paul!" The hearts of his friends in Ephesus were so intertwined with his, that when he told them on his way to Jerusalem that they would never see him again, they broke down and sobbed like children; and when the time came to say the last goodbye, they threw their arms around his neck

and cried aloud, and kissed him again and again, and in order to be with him to the last minute, they went with him to the ship, and clung to him so closely, that it was with difficulty he tore himself away from them. They saw in him a friend, a brother, a father.

The esteem in which Paul was held by those who believed in him, comes out in the pages of Luke in his description of Paul's last journey to Jerusalem. It was a continuous ovation. We exclaim—"Behold how they loved him!" At Troas, his friends were so eager to hear him, that they sat up on the last night till midnight, the room being so packed that at least one of them had to sit in a window. In order to get a glimpse of him, the elders of the Ephesian Church walked to Miletus, a distance of over thirty miles, and would no doubt have walked a hundred miles if necessary, to look once more upon his face. At Tyre, he was known only by reputation, but the Christians there gave him a most hospitable reception, entertaining him for seven days, and when the time arrived for him to go, they all went with him to the ship, men, women and children, and before the ship sailed they kneeled down on the beach and joined in a farewell prayer together. They begged him not to go to Jerusalem, but he went on. At Cæsarea, they entreated him still more earnestly not to risk his life in Jerusalem, but he could not be dissuaded. Even their fears

could not move him. They knew the sentiment in the capital, and had dark premonitions of what would happen, and it was only after Paul had remonstrated with them, and begged them not to break his heart by their tears, that they bowed to the inevitable, feeling that it must be the will of God. Jerusalem was not solidly hostile to him. In that great stronghold of conservatism, there were welcoming hands and sympathetic hearts. The officers of the Jerusalem Church were friendly, but cautious. They knew that the prejudice against Paul was fierce and dangerous, and so they suggested to him a course of action which might possibly soften the hostile feeling. Paul from first to last had the deep respect of James and Peter and John. Peter was speaking for them all when he wrote—"Our beloved Brother Paul." The leaders of the mother church never repudiated the language which James used in writing the report of the Jerusalem council—"Our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

If Paul was ready to hazard his life for Jesus, others were ready to hazard their lives for him. A man and his wife, Aquila and Prisca, were among the foremost of Paul's friends. To use Paul's own phrase, "They laid down their necks" for his life. Many were willing to do this. Paul aroused in men passionate devotion to him. When

he sang in prison, he did not sing alone. Silas was singing with him. It was not a solo but a duet. He always had fellow workers, fellow soldiers, fellow prisoners. We never see him entirely alone. Even when his fortune was at its lowest, Luke was still with him. It was possible to say of himself in every stage of his career, "I am harried but not hemmed in, perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not abandoned, struck down but not destroyed."

V

HIS SINCERITY

V

HIS SINCERITY

Is HE sincere? That is our first question concerning any man who offers himself as a moral leader. Does he speak the truth? Does he mean what he says? Are his motives really what they seem? Is he honest? Can he be depended on? If he is hollow-hearted, we will not listen to him. We have no time to waste upon deceivers.

We are sure that Paul was genuine. This is the first thing we are sure of. We may question his wisdom, and mistrust his judgment, and be skeptical as to the correctness of his opinions, and suspect his fairness to opponents, and lack confidence in his processes of reasoning, but we cannot doubt his sincerity. He comes so close to us in his letters, that on a point like this we cannot be mistaken. In a formal treatise on history or science or theology, a man can hide himself behind his subject, but in a friendly letter, the whole man comes inevitably to the front. When one is writing to a friend on a subject of vital importance to them both, one cannot play the role of a deceiver. That is contrary to nature.

When a teacher is writing to his pupils about things they have learned or ought still to learn, he cannot say one thing and mean something else. That contradicts human nature as we know it. Paul's letters are so straightforward, so unstudied, and so spontaneous, that his actual self stands out revealed. His letters ring true. One cannot sit down and read them through and come away feeling he has been reading the pious meditations of a rogue. Honesty has a note which even the father of lies cannot counterfeit.

Paul was vividly conscious of his sincerity, and was constantly asserting it, because it was so frequently assailed. Wherever he went there were men who tried to make him out a liar. This cut him to the quick. Nothing is so painful to a conscientious man as insinuations that what he says and does is hypocritical. From his youth up, Paul had been intensely conscientious. He was a conscientious Pharisee before he became a conscientious Christian. He put himself under rigorous discipline to keep his conscience void of offense toward God and toward men. This was a cardinal principle of his whole life. When he persecuted Christians, he did it because he believed he ought to do it, and now as a Christian he says he is doing the things which he is convinced he ought to do. In preaching Jesus, he is obedient to a heavenly vision, and "woe is me," he exclaimed, "if I do not do it!" His constant

effort was to keep on good terms with his conscience and it was a source of joy to him—so he wrote to the Corinthians—that his conscience approved what he had done in Corinth. He urges Timothy to hold fast to a good conscience, and warns him against men who speak lies, being "seared in their conscience as with a hot iron." It was his boast before the Sanhedrin, that he had lived in all good conscience before God until that very day.

We are not interested just now in the teaching of Paul, except in so far as his teaching throws light on his character. A dishonest man can praise honesty, and it is easy to extol virtues which one does not himself practice. But something can be learned of a man's character by the *way* in which he teaches, by the enthusiasm and persistency with which he drives a truth home, by the frequency with which he comes back to it, and by the way it kindles his soul. When Paul says to the Colossians, "Lie not one to another," he says it with such passion that we are certain he is expressing his innermost heart. He had lived a long time in Ephesus and knew what a city that was for liars, and when he wrote to his Ephesian converts, he urges nothing more frequently than the duty of laying aside falsehood, and telling one another the truth. Not only does individual character fall to pieces under the passion of moral deceit but society itself crumbles,

if men are not truthful, because we are organically one, so Paul teaches. How incredible that a man should see so clearly the deadly consequences of deceit and express so forcefully his condemnation of it, and at the same time be a man of dishonest heart! And yet this was the sin with which Paul was charged all through his Christian life.

It is painful to hear him denying it. "I am telling you the truth," he writes to the Romans, "what I say is no lie when I assure you that I suffer constant anguish of heart because of the unbelief of my people." To the Galatians he writes—"What I write to you is the truth, before God I am not lying." He puts himself under oath again and again. When he relates to the Corinthians the amazing record of his hardships, he goes on to add, "God knows that I am not lying." Such a story did indeed sound fabulous, and he knew there were men in Corinth who would say it was all a hoax, and so he feels constrained to call God to witness that he is speaking the truth. Even to Timothy he wrote, "When I say I was appointed a teacher to the Gentiles, I am speaking the truth, I am not lying." He seems to have gotten into the habit of saying, "I am not lying," because he was always haunted with the fear that some one was distrusting his word. That was one of the crosses he had to bear. He is always calling God to witness that

he is speaking the truth. When he tells the Thessalonians that he did not flatter them, he calls God in as a witness, and when he tells the Romans that he makes mention of them in his prayers, he calls in God as a witness again. When he tells the Corinthians why he did not come to see them, he falls back on God forthwith as his witness. He carried this too far. The only excuse for him is that he lived in an atmosphere poisoned by suspicion, and that his sensitive soul writhed under the insinuations that his words were not true. It is pitiful to hear him saying to the Corinthians—"We wronged no man, we corrupted no man, we took advantage of no man. Did I take advantage of you by any one whom I have sent unto you?"

To Paul, Jesus was the incarnation of truth. God was in him reconciling the world to himself. Paul was Jesus's servant. Paul took all his orders from Jesus. To be like Jesus was his deepest ambition. Paul knew what Jesus thought of hypocrites. Jesus was a man in whose mouth there was no guile. To bear witness to the truth was his mission in the world. Paul is his Ambassador. It is his work to reproduce so far as possible the traits of Jesus in his own soul. That a man swayed by this conviction should go on year after year saying one thing and believing another thing, is a supposition too preposterous to be entertained by any healthy mind. Every-

thing points in the direction of Paul's sincerity.

But we must have some proof of a man's integrity beyond his own personal assertion. And that proof, Paul abundantly supplies. His manner of life demonstrates the sincerity of his professions. When men lie, they lie to secure some advantage, either for themselves or for their family, or for their friends. Many men lie for money, others lie for advancement, and others lie to make or save a reputation. Men do not lie when they know that by the lie they tell, they are going to forfeit everything which the world counts dear. Paul at the age of thirty had brilliant prospects. Because of his ability and education and noble character, all doors were open to him. No one knows how high a place he might have won in the Jewish world had he never become a Christian. By saying that he had seen Jesus alive after the crucifixion, he put an end forever to all hope of earthly advancement. There was no room for him anywhere, either in Jerusalem or in Tarsus. Every avenue was blocked—every door was locked and barred. His own family cast him off. His old friends turned against him. His fellow students in Jerusalem gave him the cold shoulder. A man does not tell lies to bring upon him such afflictions as that. He exposed himself to the ridicule and vituperation of all the people in the world who had opinions worth regarding.

From the hour of his conversion onward, he was a persecuted man. No matter where he went, his life was always in danger. In every land he was sure of hardships and tribulation. He was at the mercy both of the Gentiles and the Jews. Both of them jailed him and flogged him whenever they got a chance. His existence was a living death. But he went right on asserting that he had seen Jesus. If it was a lie, it was a costly one. Paul made no money out of it. When he was old, all that he possessed except the clothes on his back, was an old overcoat and a few books. He made no reputation by it. On the contrary he lost his good name. Men took his reputation and tore it to tatters and scattered them on the winds. Like his Master, Paul made himself of no reputation. To some he seemed crazy, and to others he had a devil. He was reviled and defamed, treated, as he said, as the scum of the earth, the very refuse of the world, but he kept right on declaring that he had seen Jesus. He must have seen him or he would not have said so at so frightful a cost. When he thought of his career, he was reminded of the gladiators doomed to die in the amphitheater. Just as those wretches furnished in their sufferings and death a spectacle for great crowds to look at, so were he and his fellow apostles a tragic show for the entertainment of the world. In his own graphic phrase, he died every day. Now, a liar is not capable of so

heroic a feat. A rogue is not equal to such a rigorous test. A deceiver is made of flimsier stuff. Men do not tell lies to increase their misery. Paul by his conduct furnished an irrefutable demonstration that what he said he believed to be true.

The demonstration becomes all the more impressive and convincing, because of the long years through which it was carried. It is not impossible to endure suffering for a day or a week or even a year, but no man in his right mind will go on suffering through half a lifetime for what he knows is a falsehood. Paul's martyrdom is thrilling because it is so long drawn out. His crucifixion extended through thirty years. Only a heart fortified by the consciousness of being in possession of the truth could ever endure so severe an ordeal. "The love of Christ constrains me," was the way he expressed the compulsion which he felt upon his soul. There is no surer way of drawing out of one's mind every suspicion of Paul's insincerity, than to read the record of some of the things which he suffered. The list of hardships is by no means complete, but is sufficient to awe the heart. He declares that on five different occasions, he had been beaten with thirty-nine stripes by the Jews. At three different times he had been flogged with the Roman rods. Once he had been stoned almost to death. Three times he had been shipwrecked,

and a whole day and an entire night, he had floated on the surface of the deep. His life had often been in danger from swollen rivers, and from brigands and bandits, from bigoted Jews, and from pitiless foreigners. He had often been in peril in cities, and also in the wilderness. He had faced death in storms upon the water, and in fiercer storms upon the land where cruel and treacherous men had done their utmost to overwhelm him. He had labored hard through many a day, and lain awake many a night. Often had he been hungry, and often had he suffered from thirst. Sometimes he had been benumbed by the cold because of lack of clothing. Besides all these physical hardships, there was a vast mass of mental affliction, at which he can only hint, the numberless problems rolled on him by the harassed and helpless churches, converts persecuted and perplexed looking to him for comfort and guidance. But no matter how many perils and obstacles confronted him, or how many sufferings overtook him, he went triumphantly on, saying—"None of these things move me!" They would certainly have moved a cheat.

It is always interesting to note a man's behavior in the apparent presence of death. On three different occasions we see the Apostle look death in the face without wincing—once when the mob was on the point of killing him in the temple court, once when his ship was wrecked on

the Mediterranean, and once when he sat in prison in Rome calmly waiting the end. In all three instances, there was not a word indicative of the spirit of a man who had been playing a false part and is going soon to meet his Judge. As soon as he gets a chance to speak to the mob, he begins to tell the old story a hundred times repeated, of how he had seen Jesus at the Damascus gate. And in the Roman prison instead of repudiating his belief, he reaffirms it saying—"I know whom I have trusted, and I am certain he is able to keep what I have put into his hands till the Great Day." One might be able to say with Festus that Paul was crazy: it is impossible to say he was insincere.

Here then is rock on which it is possible to build. We have found an honest man, and out of an honest heart all sorts of good things can be expected. It is the man Paul, and not his interpretation of the fall of man, or the death of Jesus, who is to give us strength and hope in wrestling with our problems and fighting our battles. Paul had a striking way of talking about himself. He was of humble heart, but it is instructive to note how large a place he fills in his correspondence. He had a fashion of calling attention to himself. He did not hesitate to exhort men to become what he was. He lived a life that was so filled with the spirit of the Lord of Life, that he could say—"Look at me! Imitate me!" Luke could

not forget how Paul on the beach at Miletus held up his hands before the eyes of the Elders of Ephesus saying—"You know how hard these hands worked!" They were probably stained and calloused by the handling of the goat-hair cloth. The thread had left deep marks on the fingers. His hands were a part of the human epistle which Paul was asking these Ephesians to read. He reminds them that all the time which was not spent in earning his daily bread, was devoted to them, and that for three years he had admonished and instructed them day and night, oftentimes with his eyes filled with tears. "In all things I gave you an example of how one ought to live—working hard and giving help to the needy, remembering the word of the Lord Jesus that to give is more blessed than to get." These men had no doubt of Paul's sincerity. He had proved it to them by living nobly in their midst for a thousand days. The memory of his life among them, and the thought of his going away, caused tears to gush from their eyes. Grown men do not weep on the neck of a scamp on the eve of his departure, nor shower kisses upon him.

Paul regarded his whole body as a proof of his sincerity. He had many detractors in Galatia, and some who had once followed him now followed him no more. He puts up an impassioned defense, making use of argument and

scripture and illustration and exhortation, and every other homiletic device within his reach, but at the end he falls back on himself as the best refutation of their calumnies. If they thought he was lying when he said he had gotten his commission, not from any man but straight from the Lord himself, all he could do was to ask them to look at his body. After this, he said, let no one try to interfere with me in my work, because I have branded on my body the marks of Jesus. The stones at Lystra had left scars. The disfiguration caused by the Roman rods was still visible. The Jewish thongs had cut deep, and the wounds though long since healed still showed spots that were red. Slave owners in the first century had a custom of branding a slave so that wherever he might be found, the ownership of his master could be established. Paul is the slave of Jesus, and God has allowed Paul to be branded so that all the world might know to what Master he belongs.

It is fortunate for the Christian religion that at its very beginning stands a man whose personality is distinct and unmistakable, and that this man lived a life so true that faith in his integrity cannot by any ingenious speculations be shaken. It was a fashion once in certain reckless circles to decry the New Testament as a dishonest book, the clumsy creation of fable-makers and forgers. That hypothesis was long ago aban-

doned. Whatever one may think of the things recorded in the New Testament, one thing is certain, it was written by honest men, eagerly desirous of putting down with accuracy the things which they had seen and heard and experienced. Paul never posed. There was nothing artificial about him. He had no affectations. He was incapable of deceit. If Diogenes in some other world should go searching with his lantern for an honest man, he would shout on reaching Paul—"I have found him!"

VI

HIS SANITY

VI

HIS SANITY

But sincerity is not enough. A man may be sincere and still be unreliable. Some of the most dangerous men of history have been unmistakably honest. A man can be sincere and at the same time be a fanatic, or a visionary, or a lunatic. Crack-brained men often mean well. A man mentally deranged may be obsessed with the idea that he is the servant of God. Religious people are sometimes the victims of hallucinations and their sincerity renders them all the more active and dangerous.

There are reasons why one might be inclined to suspect the healthiness of Paul's brain. He was a man of visions, and we are naturally skeptical of people who see things. He heard voices, and we are distrustful of people who hear things which we do not hear. He fell into trances, and a man who does that is obviously abnormal. He passed into ecstatic raptures, being once, on his own testimony, carried into the third heaven, and at another time into the seventh heaven, and peo-

ple who soar so high create in us a sense of uneasiness. He spoke with tongues, and people who speak with tongues have often ended in the mad house. He had what he called a thorn in his flesh, and as no one knows what that was, some theorists endowed with superior discernment have asserted quite confidently that it was epilepsy. When one is once convinced that Paul was in the habit of having epileptic fits, it is easier, at least for some persons, to account for the things which he saw and the voices which he heard.

But unfortunately for this theory, Paul persists in thinking and acting and writing as though he were sane. He seems to be the very incarnation of common sense. His levelheadedness is remarkable, and if we are to judge from the general course of his conduct, his brain was robustly sound.

A man could scarcely be put to more varied or more searching tests than those to which Paul was subjected. People were always asking him difficult and perplexing questions, and many of his answers are recorded. They are the answers of a clever and sagacious man. He was often importuned for advice, and specimens of his advice are spread before us in his letters. For proof of his sanity, one need read only his First Letter to the Corinthians. That letter is packed full of evidence that Paul was remarkably clear sighted

and long headed. As the leader of a movement which was blazing its way through a forest full of obstacles and dangers he was obliged to grapple with complicated and baffling problems. His solutions, written down in his letters prove him to have been a man of amazing insight. He separated the incidental from the essential, the temporal from the eternal, with a swiftness and precision which only a mind of the first order can exhibit. In such a realm, a diseased or distracted intellect would have fumbled and gone astray.

Paul was not an impractical dreamer. His letters are filled with ethical maxims which sparkle like gems. The Church includes them among her most treasured possessions and the whole world recognizes them as classic expressions of common sense. For instance—"All things are lawful but all things are not expedient." "Knowledge puffs up but love builds up." "Keep a check upon loafers." "Never lose your temper with any one." "See that none of you pays back evil for evil." "Always aim at what is kind to one another and to all the world." "Rejoice at all times." "Never give up prayer." "Thank God for everything." "Never let the sun set upon your exasperation." "Give the devil no chance." "Let no bad word pass your lips." "Lead lives of love." "Make the very most of your time." "Never be anxious." "Let your love be a real

thing." "Never let your zeal flag." "Let your hope be a joy to you." "Make a practice of hospitality." "Bless those who make a practice of persecuting you." "Associate with humble folk." "Never be self-conceited." "Never pay back evil for evil to any one." "Do not let evil get the better of you: get the better of evil by doing good." "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good." All of these and a hundred others are eternally sound and perennially refreshing. The world will never outgrow them. Men do not write such maxims in short intervals between epileptic fits!

Paul was a master-thinker. His letter to the Romans is one of the immortal products of the human reason. Some of the greatest intellects of the Christian centuries have reveled in the sweep of its vision and have exhausted their strength in trying to master its dominant ideas. Men do not come out of a debilitating spasm to write in this style.

Paul was not a visionary. He wasted no time in fantastic imaginings, or in bootless quests. He had a horror of beating the air. He gives us no pictures of heaven or hell, indulges in no elaborate descriptions of the bliss of the blessed or the woes of the lost. He is not tormented by a daft eagerness to lift the veil. He has no itching desire to communicate with those who have passed into the world of the dead. The Witch

of Endor had no attraction for him. His mind is everywhere and always healthy.

Paul was not a fanatic. He had no hankering after martyrdom. He escaped his enemies whenever escape was possible. He did not think it ignoble to be let down in a basket from the wall of Damascus, nor did he hesitate to run off in the dark from his enemies in Thessalonica. He had no foolish ambition to suffer for the sake of suffering. He knew what pain is and shrank from it. He warded off a flogging whenever he could. In all this he played the part of a sensible man.

Paul was not a high strung and excitable invalid who could readily be thrown into hysterics. He met emergencies with an unruffled pulse. He passed through stirring crises without a flutter. He faced unexpected situations with a mind that never lost its poise. The earthquake in Philippi upset the jailer but not Paul. The mob in Jerusalem did not paralyze his mental powers. From his speech to his would-be murderers, we can see that every cell in the gray matter of his brain was functioning. On shipboard in the fearful storm, he was so undisturbed and masterful, that the two hundred and seventy-five human beings who were his fellow passengers huddled round him for heartening and counsel. He never passed into a trance when a bit of hard work was to be done. He never conversed with angels when the

time had come to deal with men. He was equal to every situation, because his nerves were steady and his mind never played him false.

Paul was not afflicted with megalomania. He had a high estimate of himself and his mission, but he never played the part of Simon Magus, giving out that he was some great person, that power of God which is known as the "Great Power." He knew he was a man and was keenly conscious of his limitations. He was careful to observe the proprieties of every situation, and always respected the sensibilities of his audience. He knew how to say the right thing in the right way, whether he was speaking to the peasants of Lystra, or to the Intelligentia of Athens, or to the crowned heads in Cæsarea. A mind diseased lacks this fine discriminating power.

Paul was not a wild-eyed enthusiast swept away on the torrent of his ideas. He believed that Christ was coming soon, but he did not talk about it all the time, nor did he think that this absolved men from doing their daily duty. There were hot heads in Thessalonica who could think and talk of nothing else but the second coming of the Lord, and they were so obsessed with this that they did no work, allowing others to feed them. Paul was disgusted with such loafers. "If a man will not work, neither shall he eat." That was his swift and practical method of dealing with them. The chicken-hearted Thessalonians were reluctant to apply such drastic treat-

ment, but Paul urged them to it. No gushing sentimentalist was he.

He could speak with tongues more than any one else in Corinth, but he never allowed this gift to run away with him. He had what men call "horse sense." He nowhere shows his sense to better advantage than when he deals with the turbulent and incoherent crowd in Corinth. This is what he wrote: "Unless I understand the meaning of what is said to me, I will appear to the speaker to be talking gibberish, and to my mind he will be talking gibberish himself. Thank God I speak in tongues more than any of you; but in church I would rather say five words with my own mind for the instruction of other people, than ten thousand words in a tongue which no one else can understand. Brothers, don't be children in the sphere of intelligence." No flighty and delirious rhapsodist was Paul.

He held a high doctrine of freedom. He exulted in the liberty with which Christ has set men free. But he did not become a doctrinaire. No one idea, however glorious, was allowed to crowd out all others. "If a man is really free, then he can give up his liberty for the sake of others," so he wrote to men who were just beginning to learn the meaning of freedom. Only a man endowed with keen powers of penetration could see a truth like that. There are men today, and quite clever too, who cannot see it.

There was nothing upon which Paul spoke

with more vehement emphasis when he was arguing with the legalistic Jews, than the fact that circumcision is not essential to coming into right relations with God. "Circumcision is nothing," so he said. But he was not infatuated. There were men who gloried in the fact that they had not been circumcised, assuming that this was especially pleasing to God. Paul harbored no such illusion. "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing. The one important thing is manhood. It is a new creation, a higher type of man which God is looking for. Nothing counts in his eyes but love." Paul never walked on the clouds. He stood always with both feet on the earth. He held his ideas within limits, and his enthusiasms under control. Such is not the habit of a madcap.

There are fourteen witnesses to Paul's sanity —his letters and the history by Luke. Luke was a physician and had opportunity to observe Paul at close range. To Luke Paul was not a victim of delusions, but a sane-minded and great-hearted hero whom he reverenced with his whole soul. You can feel this in every paragraph of his narrative. When Luke begins to write about Paul, he finds it impossible to write about anybody else.

With Paul's letters and Luke's narrative before us, it will never be possible to convince the world that Paul's mind was unsound. Men may

find it difficult to explain some of the Apostle's experiences, but a man is not necessarily insane because we cannot altogether understand him. We have no right to consign a man to the psychopathic ward of a hospital, because he had experiences which have never come to us. There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our psychology. He is a reckless man who asserts with confidence that Paul was an epileptic, and proceeds to brush aside what Paul saw and heard in his highest moods. That is an easy way of discrediting the Apostle, and bringing the Christian religion into disrepute. Some have said that all men of genius are insane, and others have relegated all religion to the realm of fancy, and others have concluded that all earthly life is nothing but a troubled dream, but men of healthy mind engaged in practical and useful work cast off all such vagaries and hypotheses. The mind when it is normal recognizes health in other minds, and refuses to accept the cynical maxim that most people are crazy.

There have been two absurd interpretations of the origin of Christianity, popular among minds of an eccentric type, the mythical theory and the hysterical theory. According to the first theory, much of that recorded in the New Testament is legend, poetry and myth. All stories of the supernatural are fanciful accretions which have gathered perhaps around a few simple facts which

no one can any longer be assured of. In its extreme form this school of speculative ingenuity gravely propound and discuss the question—"Did Jesus of Nazareth ever live?" and the conclusion laboriously arrived at is that Jesus is a myth. The second theory, equally flimsy, lays less strain on one's credulity and patience. According to the hysterical theory, Christianity arose in the hallucination of a woman who thought she saw Jesus alive after the crucifixion, when in fact she never saw him at all. She communicated her madness to the Apostles, and thus did a new religion start out to conquer the world. Poor Mary Magdalene was only a woman, and unfortunately never wrote anything which has come down to us, so that we are not able to cross-question her, or subject her to any psychological tests. It is easy to brush her aside as a woman given to hysteria. We know that some women often become excited, and in their excitement imagine things which have no existence outside of their own brain, and why should not Mary of Magdala have been a woman of that very sort? The case is thus easily dismissed. But Paul is not so readily gotten rid of. To the embarrassment of his critics he was a man, and a man of solid and unmistakable character, and no one deserving attention has ever yet dared to pronounce him a myth. To the further discomfiture of those who theorize about him, Paul wrote many letters, thirteen of which are in

our hands, and in these letters we have a mass of evidence of his sanity which can never be explained away. In these letters he does not move, except occasionally, in the realm of the general and abstract, but amid the concrete complexities of everyday life. He answers questions, gives advice, administers rebuke, delivers timely warnings, moves in and out among the crowded happenings of the passing days, offering comments, suggesting lines of action, and at every turn he gives fresh proof of possessing a nimble, farsighted and judicious mind. The ingenious critic of the twentieth century may cry out with Festus —"Paul, you are mad!" but out of the letters there comes a voice, clear and calm, confident and convincing, "I am not mad, most excellent Critic, but speak forth words of truth and soberness."

VII

HIS WEAKNESS

VII

HIS WEAKNESS

Why attempt to cover it up when he himself was always ready to confess it? Paul was one of the most candid of men. He always spoke out. He laid bare his innermost soul with the frankness of a child. He was sometimes scared, and he admitted it. Sometimes he was despondent, and he did not conceal it. At times he was discouraged, and he divulged it without chagrin. More than once he was heartsick and forlorn, and he wrote it all down so that the whole church might be fully informed. When we speak of the inspiration of the Apostle, let us remember that one feature of it was his willingness to let the whole world know that he was sometimes in the dumps. He was confident that the experiences of his ancestors in the wilderness were valuable because they furnished warning and instructions for all who came after them. So does the weakness of Paul become a medium of revelation to all who are in need of heartening.

To the Romans who had never seen his face, Paul does not hesitate to reveal his inner life up

to the time he became a Christian. It was a humiliating story, but he told it. He went about, he said, with a constant sense of defeat. He suffered from an incurable weakness of the will. In a paragraph which has become the classic expression of universal experience, he wrote: "I cannot understand my own actions. What I wish to do, I do not do, and what I detest I keep on doing. I know what is right, but I do not do it. I have not the strength to do it. I am acquainted with the law, but the law does not furnish me power. There is a conflict between my lower self and my higher self. My lower self often wins. I am held tight in a bondage which I cannot escape. Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?"

Jesus delivered him from his sense of condemnation. When he became a Christian, Paul ceased to feel like a slave, and began to feel like a child. God was his father, and Paul was God's son. He was a member of God's family, but had the manifold imperfections and frailties of a child. The early struggle went on, but on a higher level and in a different form.

Paul had a sensitive nature. He was constitutionally timid. He shrank from danger. He winced in the presence of pain. The hatred and scorn of men tore him to pieces. He was in a demoralized condition spiritually when he began his work in Corinth. To use his own words, he

began in "weakness and fear and great trembling." All the snap had been taken out of him by the blows showered upon him in the preceding weeks. Ever since his arrival in Europe, his life had been harassed and jeopardized at every step. In Philippi, he had been flogged and jailed, and then ordered by the Roman officials to leave the city. From Thessalonica he had been driven out by a frenzied and murderous rabble. He had been obliged to leave Beroea, because of the rioting his presence provoked there, and he had been laughed out of Athens by the intellectual leaders of that city. He came into Corinth a dispirited and discredited man. He was so full of alarms that he was all atremble. His work in Corinth opened inauspiciously. He had to leave the synagogue and hold his services in a private house. It looked as though his tragic experiences elsewhere were to be repeated in Corinth. He went on with his work, but he was fearfully downcast, and the memory of those somber days remained with him long.

Corinth was not the only place in which Paul had the doldrums. He narrates to the Corinthians an experience which he passed through in Macedonia when he was on his way to Corinth for his second visit. He says that when he arrived in Troas where he had gone to preach and where a splendid opportunity was offered him, he could do nothing at all because he could not get his

mind on his work. The cause of his worry was the failure of Titus to appear. And so, leaving Troas, Paul plunged into Macedonia; but changing his environment brought him no relief. There was wrangling all around him, and his mind was full of fears. His soul was oppressed by gloomy forebodings. Terrifying imaginations unnerved him. He did not become himself again until Titus arrived with favorable news from Corinth. Such moods were probably not uncommon. He relates to the Corinthians another of his experiences, this one in the province of Asia. He does not explain the nature of the misfortune which befell him there, but he pictures his condition in vivid words. He declares that he was crushed. More was rolled upon him than he could stand. He thought he was going to die. He felt sure of it. The last vestige of hope expired. Like many another man in an hour of dejection, he could think of nothing but the cemetery.

He realized to the full how fragile he was. One day after dwelling on the divine illumination which had been given to him, he went on to add—"We have this treasure in earthen vessels." He was indeed exceedingly human, and he realized it to the full. His sensitiveness made life serious and sometimes burdensome. He suffered pain more keenly than many men do. His sufferings were more intense than those of men who are coarse-grained and stolid.

He had a habit of meditating on the hardships he had passed through. He dwelt on them because they had left a deep mark on him. "We are pressed on every side, we are perplexed, pursued, smitten down." That is the way he described his life to the Corinthians. Late in life, he was still ruminating on the things he had suffered at Antioch and Iconium and at Lystra on his first missionary journey long years before. In his very last letter, he dwells upon them in a way which shows they are yet fresh in his mind. Those persecutions, those awful persecutions! How could he ever forget them? One can almost feel him quiver and cringe as one reads his words.

Paul is enrolled among the world's heroes, and we do not easily think of heroes as the victims of fear. A hero, we imagine, is a man of courage, and a man of courage is not acquainted with fear. This shows our ignorance of heroes. A hero is not a man who has never quaked with fear, but a man who has quaked and subdued his quaking. Paul is not ashamed to avow that he had quaked. In confessing this he adds a cubit to his stature in the estimation of all who know how to appreciate courage. Many a man is too cowardly to admit that he has ever had cowardly feelings. Paul holds back nothing.

He told his friend Luke that unless God had helped him he could never have gotten on. Luke

in his history gives three instances of this divine assistance. Once in Corinth when Paul's spirits were at low tide, the Lord said to him in a vision in the night. "Don't be afraid, Paul. Go right on speaking, no one is going to hurt you." We read Paul's condition in the words which were spoken to him. His courage was oozing out. "Don't be afraid," said the Lord. He was wondering whether it was worth while to go on. "Go on!" said the Lord. He was afraid that the Jews would trap and kill him. "Nobody is going to hurt you," said the Lord. In that night Paul became convinced that his fears were groundless, and that there was still work in Corinth for him to do.

A similar experience came to him in the City of Jerusalem the night after the trial before the council. The world had grown dark again. There was no light anywhere. Paul's dreams and plans of seeing Rome had been dashed to pieces. He was a prisoner in a cell in the castle in Jerusalem. Every route to Rome was blocked. His enemies had gotten him at last completely in their power. Like Elijah, Paul crawled under a juniper tree, feeling that the fate which had befallen so many servants of the Lord had now overtaken him. While there in the depths of despair, a still small voice began saying to him—"Cheer up, Paul. You are going to testify concerning me at Rome." We can always read Paul's state

of mind in what the Lord is reported to have said. God always speaks level to our needs. When he says "Be courageous!" it is because our fears are on the point of overwhelming us. If he said "Cheer up!" it is because we are fathoms deep in gloom. When he says, "You shall surely go to Rome," it is because we have given up all expectations of ever seeing that longed-for city. Paul was not ashamed to tell Luke how hopeless he was in his castle cell. But in his despondency, a fresh, brave feeling of confidence surged up in his soul. Who could have created that feeling but God?

It was necessary that Paul be rescued again and again. Like the rest of us, he was repeatedly meeting situations which were too much for his strength. He was not the imperturbable demigod whom the pious imagination loves to picture. In a shipwreck, for instance, he felt very much like ordinary mortals. No man feels quite comfortable on a ship which seems doomed to go to the bottom. In such a crisis, one's mind acts rapidly and runs over all the plans which must now remain forever unfulfilled. Every man is a bundle of programs and expectations, and when death stares him in the face, his grip at once loosens on all he had hoped to do and be. No man, no matter how great a hero or true a saint, on board of a ship which is driven by a hurricane onward and onward nobody knows whither, under a sky

which has neither sun by day nor stars by night, and over a sea so tempestuous that it is necessary to lower all the sails, and throw overboard most of the cargo, and at last even the tackling of the ship itself, can keep the lamp of hope burning. When Luke says—"All hope that we should be saved was now taken away," he includes himself and Paul also in the hopeless company. Paul like the others had been submerged by his fears. But God came to his rescue. In the night an irrepressible conviction was born in his soul. Paul calls it a messenger from God. "Don't be afraid," said a voice, "you are going to stand before Cæsar!" Day after day, Paul had said to himself, "No Rome for me." And then at last his whole outlook suddenly brightened. It was of God. He was a man of valor, but he was not strong enough to keep on hoping for deliverance on board a rudderless ship in the grip of a hurricane on a savage sea under a wild, black sky, which for fourteen days had put out the sun and the stars, without divine assistance. Jesus could have slept in the storm.

Paul makes another confession of his weakness when he asks the Thessalonians to pray for him. He was an apostle, but he was not strong enough to do his work without the help of humble men and women who could hold up his hands in prayer. He prayed of course for himself, but his own prayers were not enough. His work was

so far beyond his powers, that other men must assist him in opening the channels of divine grace.

He begs the Ephesians to pray for him that he may open his mouth boldly. There is a vast difference between opening one's mouth boldly, and opening it timidly, apologetically, softly. It is one thing to speak in whispers, and a far different thing to put a trumpet to the lips and blow a blast which will stir to rage the whole hierarchy of evil minded men. It is only the men who speak boldly who make a dent in the life of their generation. No man can lead who does not blow a trumpet. It comes upon us with a shock of surprise, this request of Paul for concerted prayer that he may speak boldly as he ought to speak. Was he sometimes tempted to speak guardedly, to hold back those truths most likely to give offense, to tone down those passages which were sure to provoke criticism or give rise to misunderstandings, to file off the edge of his rebukes and to reduce the heat of his condemnation of ideas which were erroneous and customs which were wrong? Of course he was. Even Apostles are often tempted. Paul in this request to the Ephesians confesses that he is tempted at times to tone down his message. So difficult was it to open his mouth boldly and proclaim fully and freely the whole truth which Christ had revealed to the world that it was necessary for him to

summon all his converts to come to his assistance. The whole Church had to get on its knees to make Paul strong enough to open his mouth boldly.

The struggle which Paul was engaged in from the days of his youth, was continued under different forms to the end of his life. How fierce the struggle was is indicated by the figure he makes use of in describing it. He likens it to an athletic contest in which both strength and skill are indispensable to victory. He told the Corinthians that life for him as for them was a battle, and that he had to keep fighting all the time. He did not go at it like a man blindly beating the air, but kept his eye steadily on his antagonist, which was his lower self. "I buffet my body," he says, in words supplied by our Revised translation, but the word "buffet" does not do justice to the world which Paul used. What he says is—"I 'bruise' my body. I hit it so hard that it shows the marks of my blows." He is determined to make himself master of it, for he is haunted by the fear that after telling others how to win acceptance with God, he himself may be rejected. This is the language of a man keenly conscious of his weakness.

Along with his spiritual weakness, there went a physical infirmity, the nature of which we do not know. He had a remarkable constitution, but like many another strong man, he was not im-

mune to disease. Sometimes his illness interfered sadly with his work. On one occasion, of which we are informed, it compelled him to alter his entire program. It was because of some bodily affliction that he turned aside from his appointed route to preach to the Galatians. But his physical malady did not handicap him, it helped him. The Galatians were so sorry for him that their hearts went out to him in affection and reverence. They accepted his message as from a messenger of God. Thus in his weakness did he become strong.

Just as his physical weakness brought him closer to the Galatians, so does his spiritual weakness bring him closer to us. The Paul who serenely discourses on "Predestination" and "Foreordination" is like a God seated on a philosophical Olympus. We cannot come where he is. We cannot feel that he is touched with a feeling of our infirmities. But the Paul who is so badly frightened that he is in a tremble, who becomes emotionally so upset that he cannot get his mind on his work, who sometimes feels so blue that he cannot even preach the Gospel, who falls into sloughs of despond and flounders there until God pulls him out, who gets so dispirited and nervous that he imagines he is going to die, and who loses his temper in a courtroom so completely, that he says something for which he must apologize in the presence of a great company of distinguished

men, is a man whose pulsebeat helps us because we feel sure he is our brother. We do not need an oracle so much as a companion. The man who will help us most is not a philosopher, but a friend. We need a saint, not a saint after the medieval type, but a saint in the New Testament sense of the word, a man dedicated to God, called to be holy, and honestly striving amid many blunders and failures to live worthily of his high calling.

The world will forever need the encouragement of a man who felt the agony of fear and overcame it, who fell into the pit of despondency and climbed out again, who was defeated and became discouraged but pressed steadily on, and who having a nature which demanded constant discipline and castigation, kept up the good fight until the crown was won. In his despondencies and depressions, his dark forebodings and dismal imaginings, his sinkings of heart and seasons of loneliness, his smarts under disappointment, and his pangs of discouragement, his worryings and wonderings, his wrestlings and flounderings, he is indeed our brother. Jesus never fell. He goes before us. Paul fell. He walks by our side.

VIII

HIS STRENGTH

VIII

HIS STRENGTH

It is not Paul's weakness but his strength which first impresses the reader of his life and letters. The weakness is faithfully presented but it does not catch the eye. It is no weakling who stands before us, but a man of might. He first bursts upon us as a man of overflowing energy and indomitable and conquering will. He is dragging women and men before tribunals which are condemning them to prison and to death. He is tireless in his persecutions and carries them even into cities far away. That is Paul the Pharisee, and Paul the Christian is not a whit less masterful. He dominates the situation again and again, and in the closing pages of Luke's history, we see him the virtual captain of a ship he is sailing on as a prisoner, with nearly three hundred men hanging on his lips for guidance. Where he sits is always the head of the table.

A man shows his strength by his mastery of circumstances. Weak men are the slaves of the things which happen. They are moulded by their environment. A strong man makes use of his

circumstances for his own advancement. If they are adverse circumstances, he uses them with all the greater alacrity and success. He may not change them, but he will compel them to contribute to his spiritual enrichment. He cannot change the direction of the wind which is blowing in his face, but he can get out of it a stimulus which will help him toward his destination. He cannot change the current against which he is rowing, but he can by contending with the current so increase his strength as to become able to reach his desired landing. He cannot escape his environment, but out of it he can draw nutriment for the nourishment of his growing soul. Paul never allowed conditions to mar or overcome him. The world in which he lived did its utmost to crush him, but it never quite succeeded. "Harried but not left behind, perplexed yet not unto despair, persecuted but not abandoned, struck down but not destroyed," such was his exultant description of his life. He used every experience as a stepping stone to something higher. He converted all waste into wealth. The keenest disappointment of his life was to go into Rome a prisoner, but he does not allow his chain to daunt him or hold him down. He uses it as an instrument for advancing his cause. He is by law chained to a soldier, and the soldier can no more get away from him than he can get away from the soldier. This gives him a chance to

tell the soldier about Jesus. As one soldier after another comes on duty, Paul has in the course of a few months a good-sized congregation which has listened to his message. The spirit of the New Religion has gradually permeated the very heart of the Roman army. Like leaven it is working in the palace of the Cæsars. Moreover, his chain has proved to be a means of grace to the Christians in Rome. Their courage revived when they saw how Paul bore his affliction. The chain did not depress them but gave them heart. When they saw how Paul rose above his chain, they forgot their own disabilities and began to speak in the tone of conquerors.

There was no hardship or sorrow which he was not able to use in the advancement of his work. Even the preaching of men who were his enemies, and who proclaimed a garbled message in a spirit which was contrary to the spirit of Christ, did not cause him to repine. It made him happy to think that Christ's name was being carried to circles which had not hitherto heard it, and he felt sure that the mere name would awaken curiosity and lead to further investigations. Men of weak nerves are always in trepidation lest some one may overturn the truth. Anything less than a complete and orthodox Gospel —and an orthodox gospel is one which comes up to their own notion—is certain to upset the world. Such fears are the creation of weakness. Paul

was so strong that he could look unabashed upon the foolishness and even the wickedness of men and keep on rejoicing. He went so far as to affirm that he had pleasure even in weakness and in insults and in troubles, and in persecutions and in distresses. He found no pleasure in these things in themselves, but in the opportunity they gave him to learn the length and breadth and height and depth of living. Weakness gave him a chance to draw on the deeper reservoirs of strength, insults furnished him with an opportunity to develop and exhibit his self control, troubles opened the door to wider fields of self-knowledge, persecutions and distresses presented him a greater arena in which to play the man. Only a strong man can laugh at the things which make ordinary mortals groan. On the Island of Malta, Paul shook into the fire a viper which had fastened on his hand. That is what he was always doing. One deadly thing after another fastened itself on him, but he shook them all off, and to the amazement of onlookers stood forth uninjured.

Every man carries within him a world which must be conquered. A weak man never conquers his inner self. He is the constant prey of his inclinations and emotions, the victim of his humors and moods. If he has physical defects, they weaken and sour him. If they do not embitter him, they bring him to a querulous temper or

plaintive disposition. It requires great strength to carry with one through seven days of the week, a physical blemish which is visible to all. Paul had a bodily affliction. He called it a "thorn in the flesh." He implored God to take it away. He went to him again and again. The thorn however was not removed, and one day Paul discovered that it was possible for him to do without anything which God was unwilling he should have. That was a great discovery. It opened his eyes to the fact that strength can come to one through weakness, and that weakness can minister to power. He realized probably for the first time that one never feels so keenly the power of the Eternal as when one is most intensely conscious of his own lack of strength. He began to say to himself—"When I am weak, I am strong."

Paul was a man of moods, and as is the case with all passionate natures, his moods had in them something of the force of the tides of the sea. Many a man is the slave of his moods. They dictate to him the program of the day. They break down his firmest resolutions, and sweep his intentions completely away. A man of strength masters his moods. He does things not because he feels like doing them, but because he ought to do them. When he feels like hugging the shore, if duty calls, he unfurls the sail and steers boldly out to sea. When he does not feel like working, he seizes his task with renewed

vigor and lays out plans for still larger labors. Paul tells us how he conquered one of his most dejected moods. It was in Corinth. He had been cast out of four cities one after the other, and now Corinth seemed likely to treat him in the same way. The Corinthians were looking down on him with a supercilious smile. His heart was weighted down with anxiety and gloom. He had an impulse to change his course or give up altogether, but the impulse was seized by the throat and throttled. He made up his mind to go right on as he had been going, proclaiming Jesus as the promised Messiah. He deepened his determination to continue to emphasize the things which awakened resentment in the Jew and contempt in the Greek, the sufferings of Jesus and his ignominious death. Men of flabby fiber can be cowed by criticism and chilled by opposition. Men of strength do not flinch or run. Paul was sensitive to criticism, and he craved the good opinion of men, but he made up his mind not to change his style in deference to the taste of his Corinthian congregation. He would not adopt any of the fashions of the Greek schools. He would not pander to his hearers by using the tricks of rhetoric or elocution. He would not rely on the charm of chiseled and polished speech, even though it brought him commendation. He would continue to speak simply and clearly the things which he felt God wanted

him to say. A weak man in the pulpit readily succumbs to the temptation to appear learned. Many a man has been ruined as a preacher by putting on the airs of a scholar. If a man itches for the approbation of the people of culture and high social position, and embroiders and weakens his message in order to get it, he may win the compliment of being clever, he certainly cannot be put down in the list of the strong. Paul was too forceful a man to be caught by the demands of the worldlings who love oratorical display. He listened with disdain to the comments of his superficial critics, and went triumphantly on his way. Criticism never drove from the pulpit a man who deserved to stay there.

But a man's strength is tested to the utmost, not by his enemies but by his friends. More men are ruined by their friends than by their foes. To hurt the feelings of his friends, or to disappoint their expectations, or to pursue a course of action of which they disapprove, causes a sensitive man poignant grief. It requires all the strength which a man can muster to stand up against his friends. Paul loved his converts devotedly. He had a genius for friendship and nothing moved him so deeply as a display of affection. When he started for Jerusalem with the money he had collected for the poor Christians there, his friends urged him not to go. They pointed out the danger of his proposed visit. They

pictured in dark colors what was almost sure to happen. They bombarded him with repeated protestations and the most affectionate appeals, but he could not be persuaded. He felt it was his duty to go, and no one could swerve him from the path. He admitted to his friends at Miletus that he did not know what might happen to him in Jerusalem, and he told them he felt certain that they would never see him again, but though tears were on his cheeks, he set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem. In town after town he was assured that imprisonment and afflictions were waiting for him in Jerusalem, but these predictions did not cause him to turn back. His one desire was not to prolong his life but to finish his work, and his work would not be done unless he carried that money to Jerusalem. His tenacity of will was extraordinary. When he arrived in Cæsarea, the protests became more impassioned and importunate, but they were of no avail. They stirred his heart mightily, but they did not weaken his determination. The climax was reached when Luke joined the company of those who begged him not to go. When Paul saw the tears in Luke's eyes, and heard the beseeching words from Luke's lips, his heart quivered and in agony he cried—"What do you mean by weeping in this way? Don't you know you are breaking my heart?" After that, there was nothing more to be said. Horses were ordered,

and the start was made on the final stage of the journey to Jerusalem. Just as Jesus brushed Peter aside on his way to Jerusalem, so did Paul put behind him his devoted friend Luke. Both had a baptism to be baptized with, and both were straitened until it was accomplished.

It is in time of storm that a man reveals his strength. Paul lived his entire Christian life at the center of a tempest. The church of God has been swept by many a hurricane, but by none of greater violence than the controversy which shook to its foundations the Apostolic Church. The Apostles in presenting the religion of Jesus to the Gentile world, were confronted at once with the question—"What is the relation of Christianity to Judaism?" Judaism had her holy books, her hallowed institutions, her sacred laws. What shall the Jewish Christians do with these? And what shall the Gentile Christians do with them? When a man becomes a Christian, is he longer bound by the Mosaic legislation? Does Jesus obliterate Moses? For instance, is circumcision of permanent validity? The Book of Genesis says it was commanded by God. Jesus did not rescind the commandment. On the contrary he declared that not the fraction of one letter of the law would pass away until all was fulfilled. Is not circumcision, then, essential to salvation? Must not Gentile converts be circumcised? Can a man be a worthy Christian without obeying

the Mosaic law? If the great Jewish festivals and the Levitical ceremonies were all ordained of God, must not all men who wish to please God observe them?

Upon all such questions good men were sure to differ. Many Jews on becoming followers of Jesus could not give up at once beliefs as dear to them as life, or surrender traditions and customs which were woven into their affections and conduct. It was only natural that they should think that observances which had been so serviceable to them would be equally profitable for others. If Jewish ceremonies prescribed by God were wholesome for the Jewish soul, why should not these same ceremonies work for the salvation of the Gentile soul also? Was it not the duty of the Jewish Christian to insist that his Gentile brother should subject himself to the same discipline which had brought rich blessings to him?

But there was another viewpoint, and to Paul this viewpoint was the right one. Religion—Paul thought—is not a matter of obedience to law, but of personal relation to Jesus Christ. Circumcision is not permanently binding. The Jewish festivals are not obligatory forever. The Levitical ritual is not for all generations. Religion is not a ceremony, but a spirit, not a dogma to be accepted, nor a rite to be performed, but a life to be lived. No ceremony is of the essence of the Christian religion. A man is religious not be-

cause of his obedience to institutions and laws, but because he has in his heart the life of God. As soon as a man becomes a new man in Christ, he is set free from the Mosaic yoke of bondage.

In the great controversy which threatened the very life of the church, Paul stood forth as the champion of liberty: "For freedom did Christ set us free; stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage!" This was his watchword through a long campaign. His devotion to freedom made him a warrior. He was always on the defensive—always defending himself against some fresh attack. He was constantly on the aggressive, also, delivering terrific blows upon those who were trying to drag Christianity down to the level of a ceremonial or legal religion. Only a man of resolute spirit could have carried out his principle to all its consequences in the face of such opposition both without and within. Paul was sensitive to the sensibilities of others. He was in the habit of making himself all things to all men in order that he might win them for Christ. He never needlessly gave offense. He took pains not to put himself in apparent antagonism to the Jerusalem Church. He did his best to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. But he could not be induced to surrender a cardinal principle. Many good men are prolific in concessions for the sake of peace, they will concede almost every-

thing. For the good of the cause, they will accept almost any compromise. In order to spare the feelings of others and to avoid the danger of dissension or disruption, they will barter away their principles, and get the world into a muddle which future generations must pay a high price for getting out of. It is conducive to tranquillity to allow conscientious and determined men, however wrong-headed, to have their own way. Only men of extraordinary strength can keep men of good intentions and mistaken notions from dragging religion down to lower levels. The Church has suffered more from the weakness of good men than from the strength of bad men.

In this conflict with the Judaizers, Paul saw that the whole future of Christianity was at stake, and so he threw himself into the battle with the full force of his aroused nature. His letter to the Galatians is an impressive revelation of his strength. The letter is a bundle of thunderbolts. It was a Jupiter-type of man who forged and hurled them. He tells the Galatians what he did once in Jerusalem. He put his foot down on the proposal to circumcise his Greek convert Titus. Men of great influence suggested it, and this is what came of it: "To whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour." "Not for an hour"—that is the phrase men used in the day of the sun dial. In the age of clocks, we say, "Not for a minute," or "Not

for a second." Paul did not listen for an instant to the proposal that Titus be circumcised. He spurned the idea. He was in Jerusalem, the hotbed of conservatism. He was surrounded by men —zealous and devout—who were as conscientious as he was. To them it was a scandal that Titus was not circumcised. It would have been easy to circumcise this Greek. His circumcision would have been oil on troubled waters. There were high authorities in Jerusalem on the side of circumcision, but Paul brushed all the authorities aside. Because a man has a great reputation or sits in a high place, it does not follow that other men are bound to accept his opinions. Had James and the whole Jerusalem Church sided against him, Paul would have still held his ground. On incidentals, he was yielding as wax, on fundamentals he was like flint. Christ had died to set men free, and for the maintenance of that freedom, Paul was ready to fight to the last ditch.

The battle had to be fought not only in Jerusalem, but in Antioch also. Even in this seat of liberalism, it was necessary to struggle for the liberty wherewith Christ had set men free. The Judaizers went everywhere. They were voluble and plausible. They dogged Paul's steps from city to city. They sowed the seed of distrust in every congregation. They did their utmost to upset his work. They made such an impression in Antioch that Peter himself dared not live up

to his convictions. Even Barnabas succumbed. And Paul stood up and opposed them all! In both Christian capitals, he blew a thrilling note of defiance to all who would make the Christian religion a revised form of Judaism. He proclaimed to all generations that religion is not ceremonialism, but a matter of the heart. A man is a Christian when he becomes a new creation in Christ, and as soon as he becomes a new creation in Christ, he is free. Only a man of enormous strength could have won this victory for mankind. It made Christianity the universal and final religion.

IX

HIS PRIDE

IX

HIS PRIDE

Pride is a virtue, but it passes so easily and frequently into a vice, that in the popular mind its proper rank is often lost sight of. In its essence pride is high-mindedness, a lofty sense of personal dignity and worth; but this state of mind easily slides into haughtiness, and haughtiness glides into arrogance, and arrogance into insolence and scorn. Or pride may degenerate into vanity which is self-conceit, and love of show, and an overfondness of praise. Paul was not vain but proud. He was high-minded, conscious of his dignity, and had a horror of anything that was unworthy of him. In the Greek sense of the word, he was an aristocrat, a member of a superior class, one of his country's best citizens. In the Roman sense, he was a patrician, a member of the nobility, separated from the plebeians. In the American sense, he was a blue-blood, a member of one of the old and honorable families.

Paul was proud of his race. When he faces the mob from the castle stairs, he begins by saying

—"I am a Jew." He says it with a tone of deep pride. He was not unmindful of the sins of his race, but he did not forget its virtues and achievements. He would not allow men to think, because he depreciated the importance of circumcision, that he denied to the Jewish race a unique place and distinction. When men asked him what advantage a Jew had, if his teaching was sound, his reply was that to the Jews had been entrusted the oracles of God. When the Jews treated him as a renegade and traitor, he met them with the assertion: "I am a Hebrew of Hebrews." He would not allow any one to forget that. When his enemies boasted of their ancestry, he matched them. "Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I." He loved his countrymen with an undying love, and gloried in being one of them.

He was proud of his tribe. He dwelt upon the fact that he belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. It was a little tribe, but one full of gallantry and devotion, winning renown on many a battlefield of old. It is the martial fervor of a Benjamite which flashes out in the impassioned exhortation—"Put on the whole armor of God!" He was no doubt proud of his name, although this is not expressly stated in his letters. He bore the name of a king.

He was proud of his religion and of his God-

fearing parents. He was circumcised on the eighth day according to the traditional Jewish custom. He was proud of that. His parents were scrupulous observers of the law. They were Pharisees. He himself was a Pharisee, and exulted in that fact. He loved the name, and never discarded it. After he had been a Christian many years, he still called himself a Pharisee. Standing before the council in Jerusalem, he said —"Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees." This was not a trick to split the council by saying something a little less than the truth. It was the calm statement of a spiritual fact. In his fundamental attitude and outlook, Paul was always a Pharisee. The Pharisees were the most devout and spiritual people in the Jewish Church. They most stressed religious values, and placed a spiritual interpretation on the universe and life. He was glad that he belonged to the sect which was most loyal to God, and most zealous in its efforts to bring the whole world to him. He was a Pharisee and a Christian at the same time.

He was proud of his city. It was not in Palestine, but it was famous and glorious. The commercial metropolis of Cilicia, it was prosperous and opulent, and enjoyed the distinction of being one of the world's principal seats of learning. Students flocked to her schools from many lands, and her philosophers and scholars went abroad to enlighten the world. Tarsus was

Paul's birthplace, and it was there he grew up. When Claudias Lysias mistook Paul for an Egyptian, he was met with the dignified reply—"I am a citizen of Tarsus!"

He was proud of his Roman citizenship. It had come to him from his father. It brought him honours and rights which he valued highly. When the Chief Captain in Jerusalem ordered him to be scourged, Paul said nothing until he had been strapped to the pillar, and then turning to the centurion, he asked: "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman before he has been tried?" The centurion carried the word to the Chief Captain, and the Chief Captain hurried to Paul saying, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" With pride in his eyes, Paul answered, "Yes." I too am a Roman," said the Chief Captain, "but I had to pay a big price for my citizenship." To which Paul calmly replied, "I am a Roman born." The men appointed to scourge him released him at once, and the Chief Captain knowing that he had gone beyond the sanction of the law, kept wondering what trouble the prisoner might eventually make him.

Paul had had experience with ignorant or careless Roman officials before. In Philippi, they had flogged him without a trial, and thrust him into prison before ascertaining whether or not he was a Roman. In the morning, the Praetors sent the Lictors to the prison with instruc-

tions that the prisoners be released. This news was gladly announced to Paul and Silas by the jailer, who flung open the door and told them they might go. To his amazement the prisoners remained where they were. Paul's pride had been wounded, and he was resolved to teach the Praetors a lesson. "I am not going to come out" —said Paul—"in this way. They flogged me in public without a trial, and now in public they must bring us out. Tell them to come themselves and fetch us out." To their surprise, the Praetors found themselves in the grip of a high-spirited and resolute foreigner, who would not allow himself to be trampled on even by Roman Praetors. The officers came and with soft voices and gentle manners and many an apology, endeavored to allay Paul's irritation. Shamefacedly they conducted the two prisoners personally out of the prison, and when once in the street, they importuned them to get out of town as quickly as they could. But Paul was in no hurry. He would not run away, not in the sight of the Praetors. He walked leisurely to the home of Lydia, called a church meeting, spoke words of encouragement and counsel to the converts, and when he had completed all that he wanted to do, he started with Silas in the direction of Thessalonica.

This episode in Paul's life throws light on his interpretation of Jesus' words—"Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him

the other also." Whatever that might mean, Paul was sure it did not mean that a man to be a consistent follower of Jesus must allow men to wipe their shoes on him. A Christian has a duty to perform to Roman Praetors and other lordly minded gentlemen who have a fashion of ignoring the rights of people who fall into their power. It is his duty to reprimand them, and to let them know that they cannot pursue their high-handed methods without protest and condemnation. The proud soul of Paul recoiled from injustice, whether inflicted on himself or on others.

This loftiness of spirit flashes out again and again in his letters to the Corinthians. Of all his churches this church was most obstreperous and most prone to treat Paul in a supercilious way. He would not permit it. When they began to put on airs because of their insight and knowledge, he brought them down by reminding them that they were a lot of babies, and that he had fed them on milk. They had scarcely mastered the rudiments of Christian living, and therefore it was impossible for him to teach them advanced lessons. When they criticized him, he flung back their criticisms in their face. There is something like scorn in his words: "It is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or anybody else. The only judge I recognize is the Lord." To his Corinthian faultfinders, Paul feels superior in every way, and in his impetuosity he

becomes ironical, and even scornful. Like all proud men, he is irritated by the snapping comments of petty wiseacres. He looks down on them in pity, and pours out words now of affectionate entreaty, and now of stinging sarcasm. He will not allow himself to be pooh-poohed as an ignorant and insignificant weakling without resenting it. Here is a specimen of his sarcasm: "You have your heart's desire already. You have the blessedness of heaven already. You have come into your kingdom without my assistance. We are fools, but you are wise. We are weak, but you are strong. You are honored, but we are in disrepute." But the Apostle soon relents. This is not his ordinary style. He drops his sarcasm and resumes his natural tone. "I do not write this," he says, "to make you feel ashamed, but to instruct you as my dear children. You may have ten thousand instructors, but you have only one father. I am your father, and I beseech you to be imitators of me."

Paul's pride comes in evidence again in his comparison of himself with the other apostles. His foes were always twitting him on his inferiority to the twelve. He lacked their authority. They knew things which he did not know. He could not speak as well as they spoke. He was in fact nobody at all. All such chatter stung him. Even a lion does not like to be stung by mosquitoes. He was conscious of possessing immense

power, and he could not, without writhing, have men represent him as a nonentity. "Even if I am nobody," he says, "I am in nothing behind the very chiefest of the Apostles. Surely I did the work of an Apostle. The only respect in which I was unapostolic, was in my refusal to take pay for my work. If I am not an Apostle to some people, surely I am an Apostle to you Corinthians, for you are my work, the seal set upon my Apostleship. Am I not an Apostle? Suggest whatever test you will. Have I not seen Jesus? I maintain that I am not a whit behind the very chiefest of the Apostles. I am no speaker, perhaps, but I possess knowledge, and I made that knowledge intelligible to you."

He would not allow other Christian workers to be pushed above him by men who were determined to pull him down. "Are they ministers of Christ? Yes, but not as much as I am. In labors more abundantly, in prisons more frequently, in stripes above measure, in death often —my record is a longer one than theirs." When they intimated that he had gotten his commission from the Apostles in Jerusalem, and that everything he knew had been imparted to him by them, he flung the falsehood in their teeth, and in hot wrath declared, "The men of repute in Jerusalem imparted nothing to me. I did not get my commission from men. I was not appointed by any man. I was made an Apostle by Jesus

Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead!"

Paul could not fail to be conscious of his intellectual and social superiority to the other Apostles. They belonged to a lower social caste. They had not enjoyed the favoring environment which Tarsus had supplied. They had not had the advantage of a theological training. They had never traveled, and they lacked his breadth of vision, and his knowledge of the Gentile world. He must have thought of all this when his enemies were making him as nothing in comparison with the Twelve. By nature he was endowed with extraordinary mental powers, and a man so endowed cannot remain in ignorance of the fact. When he talked with James and John and Peter, he must have unconsciously taken their measure, and how, after this, could he feel himself a pigmy by their side? Paul was fully conscious of his keen intellect, his vigorous and versatile mind, the wide scope of his varied knowledge, and he could not with complacency allow men of less mental stature to be so magnified and glorified as to blot him out.

In the moral realm, he did not feel himself to be inferior. In sacrificing for Jesus no one went beyond him, and the slander that he had done nothing at all except with the expectation of gain, cut him to the quick and brought him to his feet in passionate protestation. He was

too proud to allow himself to be lied about with impunity.

Paul was proud of his character. When he tells the Philippians that he has learned how to be content no matter what his circumstances may be, one can detect the note of satisfaction of a Stoic. Just as a Stoic—the proudest philosopher of the ancient world—delighted in his power to live a life which was not dependent on events or physical conditions, so does Paul exhibit the same joy in his ability to master his soul. He frankly told the Philippians that he was not dependent on their benefactions. He enjoyed them and was glad to receive them, but they were not essential to the fullness of his life.

He was proud of his record. It is a proud man whom we hear declaring in public, that he has lived a conscientious life, and that from his childhood to old age he had made it a point to keep a clean conscience both toward God and toward men. He had, to be sure, committed a fearful wrong, but it was because he was ignorant and not because his intentions were not noble.

As a Christian, he was proud of his invariable policy never to accept compensation for his religious labors. He had always earned his living by manual labor, and it gratified his heart to show his friends the callouses on his hands. No one could ever call him an idler, nor could any one

rightfully accuse him of preaching the Gospel for money. He was proud of that.

He was proud also of the fact that he had never built on another man's foundation. He had always done his full share of the hard work to be done. He had not waited till the pioneer work had been completed by others, and then gone in and reaped the harvest of their toil. He had made it his practice to press into new fields. He had gone where no Christian worker had ever gone. He had broken up the soil of fields never before cultivated. He had blazed a path through forests never penetrated before. He had laid foundations for other men to build on, but for all of his own churches he himself had laid the foundation stones. This gave him gratification. A man of lofty and independent spirit finds pleasure in doing something original and undertaking things that are hard.

He was proud of his sufferings as a slave of Christ. He does not often boast of them, but he frequently refers to them, and he refers to them in a way which indicates that the thought of them gives him satisfaction. He does not recall them to cry over them, but to rejoice over them. When he says he carries about with him in his body the scars of Jesus, it is with the same deep gratification that an old soldier feels in exhibiting his scars. He is proud that he has been

permitted to suffer for the cause. With what exultation he must have written this: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." Conquerors cannot fail to feel proud of their victories.

Paul endeavors to cultivate this spirit of pride in his fellow workers. To Titus he wrote—"Do not allow anybody to slight you. Do not let voluble upstarts brush you aside. Do not permit bumptious lordlings to look down on you. Do not suffer impertinent egotists to walk over you." This is the advice of a man who has a vivid sense of personal dignity.

To Timothy, he gives the same admonition. Do not let people scorn you because you are young. Do not allow elderly men to speak deprecatively of you as a boy because they are older than you are. Any one old enough to set a good example in right living is old enough to deserve the respect of men of all ages.

It is a proud old hero who is writing thus to his son. In thinking back over the experiences of his long life, Paul sees how continuously the world makes light of the religious worker, and listens to his words with smiling disdain. The world must be reprimanded and resisted. Paul feels that a Christian man must have an abiding sense of his dignity and importance. He must of course be truly humble, but at the same time he must be proud. He must have spirit enough to

hold his head high in the presence of the mightiest and go forward in his work, not with a swagger or strut, but with the confident stride of a full-grown man.

X

HIS HUMILITY

X

HIS HUMILITY

In order to appreciate a man's humility, we must first measure the dimensions of his pride. To some persons, humility, or what passes for such, is easy. They have the native disposition of a worm. They crawl without effort. Of course, crawling like a worm is not humility but only a grotesque caricature of it, but there are those who think a wormlike attitude is worthy of a man. To others, humility is the most impossible of all the virtues. Only with exertion are they able to bow down. Because humility is so foreign to them, they come at last to hate it, claiming that it is a form of servility, a vice and not a virtue at all.

Paul was by nature proud and imperious, and therefore lowliness in him was an achievement. He won it by hanging before his eyes the example of one "who emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death." If by humility we mean holding a disparaging

estimate of one's self, then Paul was not a humble man. Paul thought highly of himself. He held his head high. He boldly said that he was not a whit inferior to the tallest of the Apostles. He took no delight in cultivating the sense of inferiority. Unlike certain humble people whom one sometimes meets, he never boasted that he knew nothing, could do nothing, and amounted to nothing. On the other hand, he exulted openly in the number of things he could do. If humility is meanness of spirit, Paul was not humble. There was nothing in him of the sycophant or toady. He never cringed or groveled. He was conscious both of the dignity of his personality and the greatness of his mission.

There are in the world many counterfeits of humility, many perversions and abnormal forms of it. We do well first to study the humility of Jesus, to find out what humility at its best actually is, and then to make the acquaintance of the humility of Paul, to find out what form humility can take in a proud nature which has been subdued by Christ.

Paul thought highly of himself, but no more highly than he ought to think. He thought soberly, and took accurate measurement of the abilities which God had given him. He was not wise in his own conceits, but realized he had always something more to learn. "We only know bit by bit, we only prophesy bit by bit," so he

wrote in the most beautiful of his paragraphs. "Many things which we know now will by and by be superseded, the perfect will crowd the imperfect out. At present we see only the baffling reflections in a mirror, but later on we shall see face to face. At present I am learning bit by bit, but some day I shall fully understand." That is the confession of a humble mind.

Paul is confident of the reality of his knowledge, but he does not claim to know everything. When he wrote to his converts, he did not put on an air of infallibility. The scholars have made claims for him which he never made for himself. Because a man sees a few things clearly, it does not follow he can see everything. A man may be an inspired Apostle, and yet at many points remain ignorant. In answering puzzling questions, Paul shows refreshing lowliness of mind. He had been asked perplexing questions about marriage, and in his answers he draws a sharp line between what he says and what God says. At one point he writes, "I am not commanding you; I am only stating what I think may be considered allowable." Further on he says, "These are my instructions. I call them mine, but they are really the Lord's." Paul is so sure of his ground at this point that he dares speak in the name of the Lord. But in taking up the next problem, he assures his readers that it is he who is speaking, and not the Lord. He does not want

anybody to think he is laying down God's law in every opinion he expresses. When he comes to consider the duties which parents owe to their marriageable daughters, he admits that he has no orders from the Lord whatever. All he can do is to give his opinion, the opinion of a man who because of God's faith in him, may be trusted to speak words which are wise. At another point, he tells his inquirers what he thinks is best for them to do, but he hastens to explain that it is only his opinion. They may take it for what it is worth, and he is inclined to think it has value, for he sees no reason why he should not have the spirit of God as well as other people.

He never posed as an authority in every detail of faith and conduct. He was always insisting on freedom. He had swift rebuke for the petty despots who set themselves up as judges of other people's conduct. "Who are you," he asks in withering scorn, "who make a practice of passing judgment on a man who is the servant of some one else? To his own master that man stands or falls. Attend to your own business, and let him alone!" He was careful not to assume the manners of an autocrat or tyrant. Sometimes his language, he feared, might imply more than he meant, and he hastened to correct a possible misunderstanding by explaining what his attitude actually was. After using strong language in affirming that the spirit of God was in

his heart, he hastens to say that he possesses no right to lord it over their faith, because they have their own standing in faith. He prefers to think of himself as a helper of their joy. He co-operates with them as a fellow worker, and does not claim to be their ecclesiastical dictator.

He was not a whit behind the very greatest of the Twelve, but he does not hesitate to place Apollos by his side. Some of the Corinthians put Paul ahead of Apollos, and others put Apollos ahead of Paul. Paul does not like it. Both he and Apollos were fellow farmhands, working in God's field, and what each man accomplished was due entirely to God. One of them planted, and the other did the watering, but the planting and the watering were parts of one work, equally indispensable, and therefore why lift one man above the other? They both alike were doing God's work, and both alike were dependent on him. All religious teachers belong to all believers, and instead of a Christian shutting himself up to one favorite teacher, he should make use of the gifts of them all. To the men who were always depreciating him, Paul showed the proud side of his nature; to those who were unduly exalting him, he revealed a heart which was beautifully humble. "Who is Paul?" he inquired of his over-zealous partisans. "Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? I am nothing but a preacher. I am not

building an institution of my own. My mission is not to create a personal following, but to reconcile men with God in Christ."

He had a lofty consciousness of his integrity, and of the nobility of his purpose, but he did not claim to be flawless in character any more than he claimed to be infallible in opinion. When he exhorted men to follow him, he was careful to add—"Just so far as I follow Christ." Christ was the ideal and not Paul. After he had been a Christian for thirty years, he wrote to his favorite church, that his supreme ambition was to know Christ. He knew him a little, but not as he wanted and hoped to know him. He desired to know the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings. "I have not attained this yet," he said, "nor am I yet made complete. But I am pressing on. No matter what others think of me, I know I am not perfect. All I claim is that I am always straining to what lies before me; I am constantly trying to become more and more the kind of man which God had in his mind when he called me to be the servant of his Son. I have not yet appropriated the righteousness which lies in Christ, but I am trying to get hold of it." What Paul aspired to be and was not, comforted him.

His deeply humble spirit breathes through his confessions. He was not ashamed to lay bare his heart. There were men in his day who

claimed to be imperturbable, priding themselves on their ability to live high above all the emotional storms of the heart. Paul made no such pretensions. He had "hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions." He was fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as other men were. When he was pricked he bled, when he was wronged he smarted. When he failed he was chagrined. When he was in danger he quailed. In all this he was altogether human, and although an Apostle with a divine commission, he humbly told the story of his tumultuous inner life, not caring what effect it might have on his reputation, or how seriously it might damage him in the eyes of those he was attempting to bring to God. "Brothers, pray for me." Wonderful was the lowliness of his great heart.

Whenever he thought of his sin in persecuting the Church, he got down with his mouth in the dust. In those hours of contrition, no language was too strong to express the self-depreciation of his penitent heart. It was when he thought of God's mercy to him, that he fell to the bottom of his self-esteem. There were hours in which he was ready to declare to the whole world that he was not a whit inferior to the very greatest of the Apostles, but when the mood of self-con-

demnation was on him, he felt he was the very least of the Apostles, and had no right to be called an Apostle at all. This habit of self-humiliation grew on him, and when he was old he was ready to assert that he was less than the least of all Christian believers. It was the memory of God's mercy to him which drove him into these fits of self-prostration. He was never so conscious of his unworthiness as when he thought of the greatness of the work which God had called him to do, nothing less than preaching to the nations of the earth the unsearchable riches of Christ, and helping all men everywhere see something which had been hidden for ages, and which would now through the very Church which he had once persecuted, reveal to this world and all others as never before, the manifold wisdom of God. It was when Paul allowed his mind to dwell on the mercy of God, that his richest gain he counted loss and poured contempt on all his pride.

This feeling so grew on him that possibly his conscience at last became morbid. In one of his latest letters, he calls himself "the chief of sinners." He was thinking again of the old days long gone when with fanatical fury he dragged men and women to prison and death because of their belief in Jesus. Paul's one consolation was that Christ in a colossal sinner like him, could show the world how merciful God is, and that

through Paul's experience many would be brought unto life eternal.

Paul invariably refused to prostrate himself before men. He met the greatest men as his brothers and equals. But before God no man ever got lower than he. In the presence of the Eternal he was nothing. Everything in his possession he had received. Every gift which God had bestowed upon him was unmerited. That is why the word "grace" became the favorite word of Paul's vocabulary. It was always on his lips and on his pen. When he met men, his salutation was: "The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." When he said Good-bye, his last word was: "The Grace of the Lord Jesus go with you." Grace is undeserved mercy. The sound of the word was music to him. It kept alive in his heart the feeling of humble love.

His humility did not exhaust itself in lowly feelings, but worked itself out into conduct. Our Lord was always praising humility. He declared that he himself was humble, and then proved it by making himself of no reputation, and becoming the servant of all. On the last night of his life, he took a basin and towel, and having used them, he said, "I have given you an example." Paul was always using the basin and towel. He did the things which needed to be done. He came down to where men were, no matter how far he had to go. Highly educated, he did his work

among people who never went to school. His converts were with few exceptions from the uncultivated classes, peasants, small shopkeepers, slaves. Even in Corinth the Church was made up for the most part of humble folk, men and women who cut no figure in the social life of the town. "Look at your own ranks, my brothers," he said, "and see what kind of people you are. Not many of you are educated, not many of you are men of influence, not many of you are from noble families. It looks as though God had chosen the people without learning and influence and social rank, to bring to an end the wrongdoing and woes of the world. There will be no chance then for anybody to boast that the progress of the Church is due to money or social prestige, for every one can see clearly when they look at the members of the Church that our movement must get its power from God."

It was not the insignificant people of his own race to whom Paul devoted his life, but to the same class in foreign lands. It was the hewers of wood, and the drawers of water, the people near the bottom and not at the top, who were first attracted to the religion of Jesus. The men of culture and property, the people of light and leading for the most part passed the new religion by. A man of culture and learning and high social rank does not readily cast in his lot with ignorant foreigners. But it was with common-

place foreigners that Paul spent most of his life. These foreigners needed a service which he was able to render, so he took the basin and towel. No wonder many could not guess the motive which would drive a sensible man into such a course. Why should a man of his education waste his time in trying to reconcile runaway slaves with their masters? Why should a man of his splendid ability spend his days working with his needle in a dingy shop with two social nobodies—Prisca and Aquila? Why should a man fit to stand at the head of a School of Theology or Philosophy in Tarsus or Jerusalem, fritter away his strength in trying to show a lot of crotchety people who were incapable of appreciating his character or understanding his teaching, how to live decent lives? The character of some of his converts was unsavory, and the seamy side of church life must have made him often sick. We can infer how morally undeveloped many of his Church members were, from the exhortations contained in his letters. It is a disagreeable and thankless work, this work of trying to lift up common humanity to a higher plane of living, unless a man has in him a spirit which is different from that which dominates the life of the average man. To use the basin and towel cuts across the grain of our nature. Men love to be ministered unto rather than to minister. They have slight inclination to give up

their lives a ransom for many. Paul was humble in the sense in which Jesus was humble. He did not stand on his dignity when a useful bit of work was to be done. He was not afraid of hurting his reputation by mingling with people of a lower social stratum. He could work with his hands and not feel degraded. He was not ashamed to do anything no matter how menial, which a right-minded man might honorably do. He was gentle and lowly in heart, and therefore he did not dislike the name servant. He was fond of it, and always wrote it after his name. That was the title which he loved the best. Others have written "Saint Paul," but he always wrote "Servant Paul." And the Greek word he chose was not the name for a domestic servant in a twentieth century home, but the name of a bond servant or slave under a master who owned him, and whom he was legally bound to obey. He counted it an honor to obey one who was worthy of receiving obedience. He found nothing unmanly in the act of submitting. He was glad to put himself in subjection to a personality higher than his own. He had the humility of a little child, always teachable and eager to learn. He forgot the things which were behind him and pressed on. He was a proud man, and could easily have become a stubborn and arrogant man, but under the influence of Jesus, he learned to bend the knee.

XI

HIS VEHEMENCE

XI

HIS VEHEMENCE

Festus thought Paul was crazy, probably because Paul got excited. As the prisoner spoke on and on, his eyes flashed and his voice became surcharged with feeling. There was a fire in him which a cold-blooded man like Festus could not understand. To tepid-blooded people, enthusiasts are always an enigma. Paul was a man who could burn with fervent heat. He was a volcano of a man and his words sometimes flowed like molten lava. He could write letters whose paragraphs blazed like leaping tongues of flame. There are sentences from his lips which still glow like burning coals, uncooled by the snows of nineteen hundred winters. By nature he was impulsive, precipitate, vehement. It was his way to plunge into things headlong. He could not do anything by halves. When he started on a course which he believed to be right, he was fiery, implacable and irresistible.

We have it from his own lips, that before he became a Christian, he was furious in his oppo-

sition to Jesus. He so hated the name that he compelled Christians to blaspheme it. He detested the Church and hounded its members, going into their homes and dragging them to prison. When the time came for trial, he had them whipped and voted for their death. He made no distinction between men and women; all alike were swept without mercy to their doom. He was so mad against the new religion, that he carried his persecution even to foreign cities. His friend Luke aptly described him as "breathing threatening and slaughter."

When a man like that becomes a Christian, his native fire still remains in him. What Paul was at the beginning in temperament and constitution, he was to the end. He was always a man of fire. We cannot do him justice unless we take that into account. His writings are misleading, unless we read them through his temperament. We cannot interpret his theology, unless we first become acquainted with his style. The style is always of the man, and Paul's style is a medium of revelation of his manhood. Too often it has been studied merely as a literary phenomenon. Scholars have pored over it, looking for Hebraisms, Hellenisms, and Syriacisms, and other things which scholars love. They have catalogued and labeled it night for linguistic peculiarities and literary characteristics. They have even counted his words, his figures of speech, and have searched day and

and when a new word has emerged, they have drawn inferences from it, and on the inferences they have sometimes built a theory, and from the theory they have deduced a doctrine; and thus has the world been deluged with books on Paul which no one cares to read. The professional word counters are not the men who can understand Paul. Nor are they the men whose word can be taken as final on questions of authenticity. When a letter is rejected because it contains a few new words, Biblical scholarship shows itself at its worst. Many men are acquainted with the Greek lexicon who are not acquainted with Paul, and no one is competent to pass judgment on the genuineness of any of the letters attributed to him, unless he is intimately acquainted with the man. Experts have ransacked the letters for excellences and defects, for elegances and vulgarisms, for beauties and harshnesses, for evidence of his Greek culture, and for proof of his proficiency in the use of the Greek language, and have then fallen to wrangling over the things which they thought they had found. The controversy over Paul's style is interminable, and the disheartening fact is that the Greek specialists have never been able to agree. To the present hour, it is an open question among those best qualified to pass judgment, whether Paul's style is literary or not. One man says he writes like Thucydides, while another declares that he vio-

lates audaciously not only the genius of the Greek language, but the logic of human speech.

But the thing of importance to mankind about his style, is not its literary qualities, but its power to carry us into the heart of the writer. In his style, we feel the heartbeat of the man. His style is rapid, it sweeps along like a prairie fire, like a swollen mountain torrent. It has been described as "a rapid conversation taken down by a stenographer, and reproduced without corrections." It is fortunate that no corrections were made. In his unstudied and spontaneous use of language, we get the man Paul as he was.

Because he was impetuous by nature, he was vehement in his use of words. He was a man of action, and hence had little liking for the refinements and embellishments of the rhetorical schools. He was a practical worker in the everyday world, and not a monk in a cell or an anchorite in a cave. He was no pillar saint. He would have jumped off the pillar before the end of the first week. He was always doing things—bringing things to pass. He was always going somewhere. He did not know how to fold his legs. He longed to see Rome—he set his heart on going to Spain, the end of the world.

He was quick in his every movement, and the spirit of headlong haste is in his style. He had no time to be careful even of grammar. When grammar got in his way, he smashed it. He

sometimes forgot what he was going to say. He did not always complete his sentences. He had not time. He never dreamed he was infallible. Had he known it, he would have thought twice before writing some of the things he wrote. He did not know he was writing for the ages. Had he known this, he would have finished some of the sentences which he left incomplete. He had no ambition to be consistent. His mind was fixed on more important things. He had no time to build a philosophical system. That is a laborious undertaking, and requires a deal of leisure. A man who thought that men had hardly time to marry, would hardly be likely to take time for building up a system of theology. He had simply a few ideas which burned in his blood like fire, and it was his business to drive these ideas home, and to do it at once. And so his style is sometimes harsh and jagged. It breaks and jerks because the current of his feeling is so full and strong. His words come out of him as water comes sputtering and gurgling out of a jug that is full. The King's servant must make haste, and so he sweeps gloriously on, committing various grammatical and rhetorical blunders, of which the scholars will write learnedly after he is dead.

A man like this cannot be understood by men who sit in their study, and in cold blood and at leisure dissect his sentences, squeezing divine doctrines out of every syllable, and drawing wi-

dening conclusions from phrases into which meanings are crowded which they never were intended to hold. The traditional conception of inspiration must be reconstructed. No idea of New Testament inspiration is true to facts which does not leave room for imperfections and lapses, for one-sided statements and over-emphasized aspects of truth, for contradictions and inconsistencies, for exaggerations and mixed metaphors, and for expressions which the writer later on had cause to regret. The image of the inspired and inerrant Apostle, which still hangs in many a mind, is a creation of the pious and uninstructed imagination. We must learn to read Paul's letters through his character. We cannot deal with his theology fairly until we first understand the man. When we once know him, we know better what weight to give to his words. We see he was incapable of building a system, and become convinced that much of the theology which is based on his letters must be cast on the scrap heap. We must judge him as we judge our acquaintances and friends. We always interpret what they say through what we know of their own selves. When they talk to us, we make additions and subtractions, qualifications and modifications, listening not only to what they say, but to what they are. We say of one, "His bark is worse than his bite." Of another, "He does not mean quite all he says." Of another, "You must make al-

lowances for that remark, you do not know him as well as I do." Just so we must interpret Paul's words in the light of what we know of his personality. He was a vehement and impetuous man. No man is to be put down a bigot because he once called a man "accursed." It is not fair to call him narrow, because at one point he was not liberal. It is unjust to call him a fatalist, because he once used a figure which annihilates freedom. Why should we call him a fool because he once used an argument which was foolish? Not a little of the theology which has been built upon Pauline foundations would never have been constructed had the builders only realized that Paul was an impulsive and precipitate man, writing in a hurry to people who needed help at once. We must interpret his teaching through our acquaintance with the man.

And so Paul was constantly getting himself into trouble, because of his driving ahead without taking the pains to make his meaning clear. He wrote a letter to the Thessalonians which stirred up so much commotion, that he had to write a second letter to explain what he meant. He wrote a letter to the Corinthians which contained statements so extreme, that it was necessary to write another letter to tone these statements down. He went ahead and circumcised Timothy, without considering the effect it might have on his work in other provinces, and so he had to write to the

Galatians to correct the impression which his action had produced.

His idea of liberty was a true one, but he did not state it with sufficient precision, and the result was that it was in many circles misunderstood and misapplied, thus giving his enemies a better chance to convince the people that he was a reckless and unsafe leader. His teaching concerning justification by faith was sound, but he did not safeguard it against false inferences, with the result that it often worked mischief in his own lifetime, and has continued to work mischief to the present day. Had he been less vehement, he would have been more careful to avoid sweeping and unqualified statements. His feeling often carried him away, and he made assertions which could not be successfully defended. While his soul was kindled to fever heat, he wrote to the Galatians: "I, Paul, say unto you that if ye receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. Yea, I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." And yet at another time, he did not hesitate to admit that circumcision is nothing and that uncircumcision is nothing. A man can be a Christian whether he has been circumcised or not. He believed it would be a good thing to have one of his own chief workers circumcised.

His teaching concerning the sexes was certain to give rise to misunderstanding. He was always

saying with great boldness that in Christ there is neither male nor female; in other words, sex distinctions in the realm of religion are no longer controlling. It was natural that the women who listened to such teaching should begin to ask concerning their rights. They could not see why they should not speak in church meetings as well as the men, nor could they understand why if men went bareheaded, women should continue to keep their heads covered. Paul met them with his usual impetuosity. He was horrified that they should aspire after such liberties. It was so clear to him that such conduct on the part of the women would be imprudent and demoralizing, that he fell into speech which is so extreme that it is ridiculous. He says, that if a woman goes without a veil in the church meeting, she might just as well be shaven. That meant in Corinth that she might as well take her place openly with the women who had lost their reputation. He went on to say that if a woman was not willing to wear a veil, she ought to cut off her hair; in other words, she ought to enroll herself among the concubines of the city. To the modern mind, talk like this is silly. The Apostle was right in the position he took, but in order to defend it, he used arguments which were strained and words which were foolish. His nature was such, that when once embarked on a course he had to go all the way.

When an idea got a grip on him, it sometimes ran away with him. He saw it and it alone. He lost sight of all other truths to which his first truth was related, and by which it was modified and held in check. He indulged in exaggerations, and made statements only partially true, not because he did not value the truth, but because of the impulsiveness of his eager, fervent soul. We must lay his various statements on any subject side by side, in order to get at the whole truth which he intended to teach. He was not a one-sided man, but he said many one-sided things, and the reason he said them was that he was so swept away by the intensity of his nature that he could see only one side of a truth at a time. Like the rest of us, he was sometimes heedless and made mistakes, and had to correct his errors, and complete his deficiencies, and pay for his blunders. Paul was as fiery as Peter and fully as impulsive, but their vehemence did not unfit them to be Apostles. Jesus was fond of ardent and glowing men. He could put up with defects and blunders in men who had zeal. He knew that only men of fire can conquer the world. When John heard him speaking to the Church in Laodicea, he heard him say—"Because you are lukewarm, I will spew you out of my mouth." Jesus himself was vehement, but without sin.

XII

HIS PATIENCE

XII

PATIENCE

It is not easy for an impetuous man to be patient. He is almost sure to chafe under delay or restraint, and to behave unseemly. People of warm impulses are prone to be unsteady. Eager and incandescent natures are in many cases easily cooled. Those who mount up with wings like eagles often come down soon. Those who run for a while like race horses become exhausted and drop out of the race. Impatience is one of the most common and demoralizing of all human vices. It works havoc with the higher life of mankind. Every parish shows evidence of its ravages. Christian men start to build towers, but do not finish them. They put their hand to the plow, and look back as soon as the plowing becomes hard. They launch enterprises which they forsake and leave for others to carry on. Most men are like children. When they want a thing, they want it at once. They are not willing to wait. They demand short cuts to goals which can be attained only by tedious and winding ap-

proaches. It is because of our vehemence that we find it hard to persevere and endure.

Paul was a paragon of patience, and we appreciate his patience in proportion as we understand his fiery and precipitate nature. He could run, but he could also walk. He could let himself out, but he could also hold himself in. He was eager to get on, but he knew how to wait.

After his conversion, he did not run to the fulfilment of his mission. He was no longer young, and the time was short, and his work was urgent, but he did not plunge headlong into evangelistic activity. He started at once for Arabia. He wanted to be alone. He desired time to think. He had made a new discovery, but he did not know yet what all it meant. He had a fresh conviction, but he was not ready to proclaim it to the world. His old creed had crumbled, a new creed was taking shape, and it was necessary to go into solitude in order to give his creed a form which could be presented to the world. Paul was a man of intellect, and to him as to all other men who use their minds on high themes, religion presented many perplexing problems. There were thronging questions, and he must, if possible, find answers to them. There were new ideas, and he must think them through. He did not know how far they reached, or what all they might involve. He had a vision, but that vision would be worthless until he worked it out into intellectual

forms which could be presented to keen and thoughtful men. His experience near the Damascus gate had caused a vast upheaval in every department of his life, and he was not ready to take a step forward until he had pondered it, and found out its meaning. A great light had flashed on him and his mental eyes were so blinded that he could not at once get his bearings. A new experience had come to him and he must comprehend it, and build it into the structure of his thinking about the universe and God. He did not come out of the house of Ananias with the letter to the Romans in his mind. He was all confused and unstrung. He plunged into the solitudes of Arabia. What he did there, we do not know. He never told even Luke. Luke passes over the sojourn in Arabia as though he had never heard of it. How long Paul stayed in Arabia we cannot tell; probably a year, possibly two years, we only know that at the end of three years, having done some preaching in Damascus, he finally decided to go to Jerusalem. He wanted to see Peter, and he craved an interview with James. Peter could tell him about the public life of Jesus, and James could tell him about Jesus' life in the Nazareth home. Paul wanted to know everything about Jesus that could be known. And then suddenly he drops out of sight again, this time for ten years. Luke does not tell us where he went or what he did. Paul tells us nothing be-

yond the fact that he went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. Through all those years, the Christians of Judea did not know him by face. They knew from hearsay that the notorious persecutor of the Church had changed his mind, and was preaching the faith he once despised. These thirteen silent and obscure years remind us of the eighteen silent years of Jesus. Neither man burst upon the world without long years of discipline and preparation. In those thirteen years, Paul became the man whom we meet in his letters. His earliest letter now in our possession, is his first letter to the Thessalonians, and that letter was written after he was fifty years of age. It is the production of a mature and disciplined mind. It was now eighteen years after his conversion and by long years of patient brooding and faithful ministering, his ideas have become clarified and his convictions have become solid as adamant. One may become a Christian baby in an hour, but not a Christian man. In those eighteen years, Paul passed from babyhood to manhood. No man becomes wise or strong in the twinkling of an eye. He may catch a new view of truth in a second, but character is built by the plodding toil of patient years. We cannot account for the calm endurance of the long-suffering hero who looks out on us from the letters, unless we remember the unrecorded years of quiet growth, during which the mists hide him from

our eyes, concealing the tedious and long-drawn processes by which the sinews of his soul were made strong. Patience is not a flower dropped magically from heaven, but a growth, or as Paul expresses it, a part of the spiritual harvest.

A man shows his patience by the way he bears disappointment. Paul had an abiding ambition to see the capital of the world. For years he had longed for the opportunity to preach in Rome. Something or other always stood in the way. At the end of many years, the coveted chance arrived; but the poor man entered the city in chains. However he did not repine. He made the best of his misfortune, and quietly took up his work. From one of his letters we know that instead of chafing and complaining because of the chain, he rejoiced in it as a blessing in disguise.

He was disappointed in not getting release from a physical affliction which hampered him in his work. He asked God to deliver him, and God refused to do it. He waited for months, and God remained obdurate. And then Paul begged him again, and God did not seem to hear. Paul waited a long time for an answer, but no answer came. Finally Paul pleaded with him once more, but he pleaded in vain. In spite of his prayers, his old affliction remained. But Paul did not sputter or give up his faith. He went on with his labors, and found out to his delight that not-

withstanding his disability, he could still do successful work.

The supreme disappointment of Paul's life was Jesus' failure to come in Paul's lifetime. This was the fondest of his hopes, the sweetest of his dreams. It became more than a hope—it grew into a conviction. He was sure Jesus was coming, and that he was coming soon. He encouraged others by inspiring them with the same expectation. Paul was always waiting for the glorious hour of Jesus' appearing. But Jesus did not come. Year after year passed, and the world went on in its sinnings and miseries, with no relief from the expected Savior. But Paul did not fume or grow despondent. He bore his disappointment without complaint. He came gradually to see that Jesus was not coming before he died. But this did not weaken his faith. He was glad to have God pursue his own course. When he was old, he wrote to some of his friends that he hardly knew whether he would rather go into the other world just then, or stay here. He was sure that death would be better for him, but as it would apparently be better for his friends to have him remain here, he was inclined to think that God would allow him to stay. No disappointment however grievous could cause him to lose his temper or rebel. His attitude is expressed in a sentence he once wrote to the Romans: "Who ever hopes for what he sees already? But

if we hope for something that we do not see, we wait for it patiently."

A man's patience comes out in his methods of work. When Paul made converts in a city, he did not at once leave the place forever. He went back to it. He walked back to it, even though it were a hundred miles. How patiently he trod those long and wearisome distances which stretched from one city to another. Why did he go back? Because his work was not yet completed. The work of a herald is of slight value unless it is supplemented by the long continued labor of other men. There must be a work of teaching and administration and of shepherding, if men are to be saved. Salvation does not come by the simple hearing of a sermon. A man may start on the way of moral recovery by listening to a message which grips his heart, but everything depends on his going on. Evangelists have too often forgotten this. They have exulted in blowing the trumpet calling men to battle, and have overlooked the importance of the patient drudgery of drilling men to meet the enemy on the field. Paul's advance from Antioch in Pisidia to Derbe was glorious, but it was not a whit more glorious than his journey from Derbe back to Antioch. On going East, Paul had made converts, but on his way West he "strengthened the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to hold by the faith, and telling them that men have to

get into the Kingdom of God through many a trouble." It takes courage to make converts, but it takes both courage and patience to organize the converts into churches with officers to administer the affairs of the congregation and to train the beginning believers in the principles of Christian living.

It is this work of teaching and shepherding and governing which most tries Christian ministers' souls. When Paul made a list of all of his hardships he put at the end, "the care of all the churches." The care of one church is a full man's work even in a Christian country nineteen hundred years after Paul's day. What must the care of a score of churches have been when Christianity was young and the converts did not have the benefit of sixty generations of spiritual experience and growth! It is our tendency to idealize the Apostolic Church, but Paul opens our eyes to the Church as it was. The Church in Corinth was probably no worse than the others, and Paul says that it had in it factions and gossip and vanity, boorishness and superstition and licentiousness, grave disorders in public worship, and even drunkenness at the Lord's supper. Church members were captious and bumptious and stupid. Gentile converts slipped back into the vile habits of the pagan world. "Do not brag, do not lie, do not steal, do not get drunk, do not indulge in filthy talk, do not give way to your lusts," this is

the kind of instruction which many of his converts needed. But he was as patient with them as a father, a mother, a nurse. He looked upon them sometimes as children, and sometimes as his brothers and sisters, and bore with them in their manifold stumblings and fallings. No wonder one of his favorite words was "Long-suffering." He knew from his own experience, that there is a love which can suffer long and still be kind.

Nothing is harder for a strong man to bear than defeat. Paul was always failing, but he always got up and tried again. They drove him out of Damascus, out of Jerusalem, out of Antioch in Pisidia, out of Iconium, out of Lystra, out of Philippi, out of Thessalonica, out of Beroea, out of Athens but he turns up in Corinth determined to go on with his work. It was not because he did not feel the sting of defeat, but because he was patient. All bleeding, he went forward knowing he would only receive fresh wounds. His sufferings did not cause him to whimper or roar. They increased his stock of endurance. To the Romans he wrote—"We triumph even in our troubles, knowing that trouble produces endurance, and endurance produces character."

It is hard to be patient with people who are low minded and mean. If men impugn our motives when we know that our motives are high, we are

ready to give up at once. Some men will work without money, and some will work without thanks, but hardly any one will work in an atmosphere poisoned by suspicion and lies. The Church in Corinth was the most trying of all Paul's churches. It was there the innuendoes were the foulest and hardest to bear. But it is at the end of his second Corinthian letter, that we find his fullest toned benediction, the one which the Church has adopted throughout the world as the most fitting with which a Pastor can express his love for his people: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." When Paul wrote those words, he gave exhibition of "the love which bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things."

One of the finest exhibitions of patience in the history of the Church is that which Paul displayed in carrying out his project of raising money in his European congregations for the impoverished Christians in Jerusalem. It was a daring thing to undertake. Collections are always certain to be opposed, especially if they are for people of another race far away whom one never expects to see. To many, Paul's idea seemed quixotic, and to others it furnished evidence that he was not altogether straight. With a wink, they intimated that not all the money would ever

get to Jerusalem. It is such talk which takes the heart out of strong men who are sacrificing for a noble cause. Even the greatest heroes lose some of their grit when they are pelted with mud. The proud blood of Paul must have tingled when he heard these vile insinuations. But he did not show his disgust or withdraw from the work. The work was too important to be dropped because of the calumnies of a few evil hearted critics. He pushed it with renewed vigor, and cheerfully suggested that agents be appointed by the Churches who should carry the money to Jerusalem. He was not sulky, he did not pout, for he said he would go along too if that course met with their approval.

Once started toward Jerusalem, he met another kind of opposition, which tried his heart sorely. His friends urged him not to go to Jerusalem because of the plottings there of his foes. They knew the ferocity of a Jerusalem mob, and they protested against Paul risking his life there. But the tenacity of his will could not be broken. Having put his hand to the plow, he refused to look back. Having begun to build a tower, he was determined to finish it. He loved to complete the things he began. To his friends at Miletus he said, "I want to have the joy of finishing my course." It is when we see him setting his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem, tenaciously clinging to the purpose he had formed

years before, and determined at all hazards to carry it triumphantly through, brushing aside the taunts of his enemies and the expostulations of his friends, his heart all the time thinking of the needy men and women to whom he was bringing relief, that we read with quickened pulse-beat the words which we repeat over the caskets of our dead—"Wherefore my beloved brothers, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." It is when we think of him patiently plying his needle at night that he may have the day free to spend in telling men about Jesus, carrying his work forward in the midst of suffering and disappointment and discouragement and failure, that there comes into his words a new pathos: "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." He did not faint. Clement of Rome writing to the Corinthians less than forty years after Paul's death, refers to his amazing and unparalleled patience. These are Clement's words: "After he had seven times worn bonds, had been exiled, had been stoned, had played the herald in the East and in the West, he won the noble renown of his faith, having taught the whole world righteousness, and passed to the boundary of the West. And after testifying before the rulers so was he rid of the world, and went to the Holy Place, having proved a very great exemplar of endurance."

XIII

HIS COURAGE

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HIS COURAGE

When the average Christian is asked to name the most vivid trait of Paul's character, his answer nine times out of ten, is "Courage." This has been the answer in all the generations. Paul is universally recognized as above all others the hero of the New Testament. Art has always loved to picture him with a sword. Sometimes he rests on a sword, sometimes he holds a sword, sometimes two swords. The sword is the symbol of his life and the emblem of his career. He is the anointed representative of the Church militant. Through the centuries, he has been the inspirer of crusaders and reformers and all who have contended mightily for the right. In the midst of conflict, men hear his thrilling exhortation as a voice from heaven, "Put on the whole armor of God."

The illustrations of Paul's courage are usually found in his experiences among bandits in mountain passes, his behavior when face to face with mobs in Lystra and Ephesus and Jerusalem, and his conduct in time of shipwreck when on his

way to Rome. But his courage in those situations was not exceptional. Bravery in the midst of bandits is not uncommon, and many a man has faced a mob without flinching. Courage on the deck of a sinking ship is an every day story. Thousands of men have shown courage equal to that which Paul displayed in the midst of his physical perils. After the experience of the great war, his list of thrilling exploits does not greatly impress us. The generation which passed through the horrors of the wildest of all world-conflicts, and which read every day of feats of physical daring unsurpassed in the annals of mankind, cannot be expected to be awestruck by the heroism of a preacher in the presence of a few physical dangers nineteen hundred years ago. The war proved that physical courage is the most abundant of all our virtues. We have a larger stock of such courage on hand than of any other form of excellence. Every town has in it boys who have the mettle of the men who died at Thermopylæ, and who are made of the same stuff as the soldiers of the tenth legion of Cæsar. What is recorded of Paul's physical courage is not sufficient to lift him to a place among the immortals.

We are to look for proof of his courage in another quarter. It is in the realm of the intellect that Paul is phenomenally brave. His intellectual daring has never been surpassed. His

courage which wins and holds the admiration of the world is not physical, but moral. We find him at his best not when contending with brigands or bigots, or when floating a day and a night on the deep, but when he is passing deserved condemnation on two of his most valued friends. What is the fury of a mob compared with the hurt eyes of a friend? What is a storm at sea compared with the storm which rages in the soul when one is compelled by conscience to pursue a course which brings pain to those who love him? Paul saw clearly near the very beginning of his Christian life that God in Christ had broken down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, and that Gentile and Jew stand on an equal footing in the household of faith. To that great truth he was irrevocably committed, and wherever he went he proclaimed it with passionate joy. The whole Church was committed to it. Peter was the first of the Apostles to recognize it and act on it. He sat down and ate with uncircumcised Romans, because he was convinced that they had in their hearts the Spirit of God. Barnabas was committed to it. He had been one of the sponsors of the radical work carried on in Antioch, where Greeks in large numbers were brought into the Church without obedience to the Jewish law. But in all great movements, there are eddies and backward swirls of the stream. There came a day when Peter

and Barnabas were not willing to maintain the position they had taken. Conservatives were complaining that their consciences were being hurt, and that they could no longer fellowship with men who had never been circumcised. This sentiment became so strong that Peter did not dare to resist it. In the interest of peace, he fell in with the group which seemed to be strongest, and refused to eat at the same table with Gentiles who declined to obey the Jewish law. Overpowered by his influence, the big-hearted Barnabas followed his example. The great truth which to Paul was the glory of the new religion was thus surrendered by two of its foremost expounders. A critical hour in the history of religion had arrived. The Christian ship was going on the rocks. A painful duty had to be performed, and Paul was the man who had to do it. He was compelled to set himself in opposition to Peter, a recognized authority and pillar in the Church, a man to whom Jesus himself had given the name of Rock. And now Paul must stand up and accuse this Rock of wavering. Moreover Paul was under obligation to Peter. Peter had entertained him in his home for two weeks in Jerusalem. Peter had told him the full story of the earthly life of Jesus. Peter was his friend. Peter had given him the right hand of fellowship. It was worth much to Paul that Peter should continue to be his friend. And now Paul

must reprimand him. He cannot do it behind his back. He must do it to his face. He cannot do it in secret. What Peter has done has been done openly, and the reprimand to be effective must be given in public. Paul was one of the most tender hearted and sensitive of men. He shrank from giving pain. He winced at the thought of hurting Peter's feelings. But when an influential religious leader is untrue to his principles, some one must correct him. When a good man through temporary weakness is jeopardizing a noble cause, some one must come to the rescue. And so Paul stood up, right in front of Peter—a more terrible ordeal than facing a brigand or foe—and opposed him, telling him frankly in the presence of the whole body of Christians that he was not playing the part of a consistent Christian man. What this cost Paul, the record does not say. Luke found the episode so distressing that he gives it no place in his narrative. Paul had probably talked it over with him in tears.

But this condemnation of Peter was only a part of Paul's agony. In rebuking Peter, Paul rebuked Barnabas also, for Barnabas had taken a place by Peter's side. "That was the most unkindest cut of all." There is heartbreak in Paul's words, "Even Barnabas was carried away." As much as to say, "The last man in the world you would have expected to succumb, the man who had a warm heart for all Gentiles, and who had

enthusiastically received them into the Church without circumcision, and without obedience to the rite of ceremonial ablutions of the hands before eating, and who had been with me on that wonderful evangelistic tour to Derbe and back again, even Barnabas could not stand up against the pressure of the Judaizers after Peter had fallen." And so Barnabas had to be rebuked, the man to whom Paul owed more—humanly speaking—than to any other man in the world. It was Barnabas who had given Paul his chance. It was Barnabas who, when nobody in Jerusalem had faith in Paul's conversion, had introduced him to the Apostles, assuring them that he was not a fraud. It was Barnabas who had invited Paul to Antioch. Barnabas was the man who had opened the door. Barnabas was the hero who had shared with Paul the dangers and hardships of the first missionary journey, who had tenderly bent over him after the stoning in Lystra and coaxed him back to consciousness again. Barnabas had never failed him. Barnabas had been faithful all the way. And now, even his comrade Barnabas was deserting the cause. To oppose a dear and tried friend cuts deep into the heart. But Paul was a hero. He was heroic enough to resist and rebuke even his friends.

It is this standing up against every conceivable form of opposition which reveals the intrepidity of Paul's resolute soul. He did things which

only a man of amazing daring would ever have been capable of doing. For instance, he gave the Christian religion a new verbal dress. He coined for it a vocabulary which has remained on men's lips to the present hour. He discarded almost entirely the words of Jesus, and substituted words of his own. He was undoubtedly acquainted with the words of Jesus, but he did not use them. There is hardly a trace in his letters or in any of his recorded sermons, of our Lord's parables, or of the Sermon on the Mount, or of the discourse in the upper chamber on the last night. This is amazing. For the oral gospel was in the air wherever Christian believers assembled together. Paul could not have spent two weeks with the swift-tongued Peter, without learning many of the things which Jesus had said. Paul was the slave of Jesus. He prided himself on imitating Jesus, and yet he did not copy his words. He poured the old wine into new wine skins. He invented a new set of terms. He forged a new instrument with which to convert the world. The Christ of the Epistles is the Jesus of the Gospels, and yet one feels on passing out of the Gospels into the Epistles, that he is passing into a different world. The old language has passed away. All the words have become new. To drop the words of the Son of God, and adopt others of his own choosing, that was courage almost to the verge of audacity. If Paul

could preach the religion of Jesus without using the language of Jesus, is it going too far to say that we can preach the religion of Jesus without using the language of Paul?

It is when we come to Paul's preaching of Jesus as the Messiah, that we are most deeply impressed by his indomitable spirit. It is impossible to appreciate his boldness fully, because we are not Jews of the first century and cannot place ourselves in the mental attitude of the men who heard Paul preach. The Jews had for centuries looked for a Messiah, a glorious Messiah, mighty and all-victorious. He was to deliver his people from bondage and trample their enemies under his feet. The idea of a suffering Messiah was abhorrent to the popular heart. The thought of a defeated Messiah was incredible and revolting. A Messiah who would allow himself to be crucified as a malefactor by an ungodly Pagan Power like Rome, was the climax of irrationality and blasphemy. The recoil in Peter's soul when Jesus told him he was going to Jerusalem and suffer many things and be killed, was repeated in the heart of every Jew when he heard the word "Messiah" linked with the cross. The cross was a stumbling block. Any mention of the cross shut the door of the Jewish heart instantly. No devout Jew could hear a man call the crucified Jesus the Messiah without being driven to fierce indignation and ungovernable rage. But this was

Paul's message. Jesus had been crucified, and Jesus was the Messiah. He preached it in every synagogue into which he could gain admission. When they put him out of the synagogue, he preached it in a private house. When no private house was available, he preached it in the street. He preached it everywhere. When he was driven out of one city, he went on to the next and preached it there. When cast out of that city he fled to another and continued his preaching. He stirred up riots but kept on preaching. He kindled fires which threatened to burn him up, but he never changed his message. He was pursued by bloodthirsty mobs, but when he got a chance, he turned and began preaching to the mob. It was always the same message—"Jesus is the Messiah—men crucified him, and God raised him from the dead." This is what he preached in Damascus, where he was to win renown as the exterminator of the Church. They called him renegade, turncoat, apostate, but he kept on preaching until they drove him out. He preached in Jerusalem where he had won a high reputation as an enemy of Jesus, and he kept on preaching until he had raised the blood of Jerusalem to fever heat. No doubt he preached also in Tarsus, but the reception he met there was so distressful that he never referred to it in any of his letters. Wherever he went, he was feared and hated and cursed for his preaching,

but he was Paul the dauntless, and he went onward along his unflinching way. His message was unbelievable, ridiculous, and blasphemous to nearly all of the pious and sensible Jews of his day, but he kept on declaring that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the dream of the prophets, and the hope of the world, and that though men crucified him, God raised him from the dead. Most good people were ashamed of what he called his Gospel, but he said: "I am not ashamed of it. I should like to preach it in the capital of the world."

The other section of the world was hardly less hostile than the Jewish section. To the Jews the cross was a stumbling block, and to the Greeks it was tomfoolery. When the Jews heard Paul preach, they gnashed their teeth; when the Greeks heard him, they smiled. To the Greek mind the story of the resurrection was ridiculous. The Greeks more than any other people of the first century had the scientific mind. They understood best the laws of nature. They knew what could happen and what could not happen. They knew that a dead man could not come out of his grave. They knew that a man who was crucified could not be a god. Any one who said that Jesus arose from the dead was talking nonsense. And yet that was what Paul always talked. He used the word "resurrection" so often, that the men on the outskirts of his Athenian crowd supposed it was

the name of a goddess. When he declared—"God raised him from the dead," men stared at him in disdain. Men of education could not accept his preposterous and inconceivable tale. But he kept on saying—"God raised him from the dead." To his Greek audience, that was the climax of his ludicrous story. In the face of pity, and scorn, and disgust, Paul kept on saying, "God raised him from the dead." Paul on Mars' Hill at the very center and abode of Grecian culture, assuring representatives of the leading schools of thought in the most enlightened city of the world, that a crucified Jew came out of his grave, and that God has appointed that Jew to be the judge of mankind, is the highest exhibition of heroism which the Book of Acts records. Paul's act that day was one of the most daring strokes ever struck by man in the entire history of the human race. It takes more courage for an educated man of refined sensibilities to affront the intelligence of a cultivated audience than to give offense to ignorant peasants whose powers of reasoning are undeveloped, and whose intellectual judgments are of little account. The fury of the mob in Lystra was no such test of courage as the cold ridicule of the critical scholars in Athens. The contemptuous laugh of those lords of culture Paul never forgot. He never went back to Athens. He wrote no letter to the Athenians. For weeks after his Athenian

experience, he was weak in body and depressed in spirit, but his courage was unabated. He determined to go on preaching that Jesus is the Messiah, that men crucified him, and that God raised him from the dead. Here is courage like unto the courage of the Son of God.

XIV

HIS COURTESY

XIV

HIS COURTESY

A MAN may be courageous, and not be courteous. People who have what they call the courage of their convictions, sometimes have slight regard for the convictions of others. A man of forceful personality is apt to encroach, oftentimes unwittingly, on the rights of his fellows. Impulsive and precipitate natures are prone to be heedless of the proprieties and embellishments of conduct. A man conscious of being sent on a divine mission is tempted to ride roughshod over men not professedly in close touch with heaven. Good men are in many cases rude, and those who are rich in noble actions are often deficient in good manners. Politeness is a virtue too often conspicuous even in religious circles for its absence. Some Christians are so intent on the development of the virtues, they have no time left for the cultivation of the graces. But courtesy is one of the finest fruits of the spirit, an indispensable feature of a character complete. A Christian is under bonds to be everywhere and always a gentleman.

Paul was as courteous as he was courageous. He had the instincts and the manners of a gentleman. These instincts were deeply rooted in him, and they found expression in the most unlikely places. We come upon numerous exhibitions of his good breeding in his discourses. His address in Athens is a model of courteous speech. Before he began speaking, Paul had overheard sundry slighting remarks about him, but these did not disturb the urbanity of his spirit. He begins as though all his hearers are friendly to him, saying, "Men of Athens, I observe at every turn that you are a most religious people." The translation in the King James' Version makes him say—"I perceive that in all things you are too superstitious." This is one of the most unfortunate of all the blunders in that justly venerated version. Paul could not have said a thing like that. It was foreign to his nature. That would have been slapping his audience in the face. No man of sense ever insults his hearers in his opening sentence. Paul was a model of courtesy whenever he opened his mouth to speak. He begins by complimenting the Athenians on their devotion to the gods. He does not quote to them the Hebrew prophets but the Greek poets, thus acknowledging that great religious truths had come to the world through them. The Athenians are not entirely ignorant of God, but he desires to tell them more. He begins with his hear-

ers where they are with the hope that he may carry them where he wants them to be. But his audience was impatient and left him before his argument was completed. On that day the polished Greek was not so polite as the Christian Jew.

Even when Paul was interrupted in his sermons, he did not fall into a resentful mood or take vengeance in boorish retorts. When Festus broke in on him with a loud, "Paul, you are mad, your learning is driving you insane," the courteous reply was, "I am not mad, your excellency, but I am speaking the sober truth." When King Agrippa became sarcastic and said, "At this rate it won't be long before you believe you have made me a Christian," Paul, not at all ruffled by the sneering words, calmly replied, "Long or short, I would to God that you and all my hearers today might become what I am," and then glancing at his chained wrists, he added "except these bonds." That was courtesy which even Agrippa must have recognized as perfect.

Paul was respectful to a mob. When the mob in Jerusalem seized him and dragged him out of the temple and began beating him, determined to kill him, he never lost sight of the fact that these men were human beings, members of his own race, his countrymen, and as soon as he got a chance to speak, he hushed the crowd by saying in their mother tongue, "Brothers and Fa-

thers, listen to what I have to say in my defense." He then went on to state the simple facts of his experience, in a tone which was so friendly and conciliatory, that every heart was for a time subdued. It was not till he mentioned the word "Gentiles," that pandemonium broke loose again, and the Chief Captain was obliged to hustle him into the castle.

It is in the beginnings and endings of his letters that we find some of the most striking illustrations of the texture of his fine and gentle spirit. These beginnings and endings have been too much neglected. As long as the letters were considered arsenals of proof texts, his salutations and benedictions attracted scant attention. Men looked for doctrines and not for character, passing over some of the most exquisite and valuable paragraphs in the Scriptures. It is in these neglected passages, that we find some of the fullest disclosures of the rare loveliness of Paul's soul. When he wrote his letters to the Thessalonians, Silas and Timothy were with him. They had been with him in his work in Thessalonica. They knew the Thessalonians and the Thessalonians knew them. At the beginning of each of these letters, Paul writes down all three names. All through the letters the plural pronoun "we" occurs again and again. Timothy and Silas are Paul's assistants, far below him in ability and knowledge and character, but he links their names

with his, using the pronoun "we" as though these young men along with him were the joint authors of the instructions and exhortations.

Paul is never more gracious than when he is sending personal messages to his friends. No matter how abstruse or obscure he may be in the body of his letter, at the end of it he becomes charmingly human. Every sentence is redolent with the aroma of the heart. We can understand every word which he writes. Probably the most neglected of all his pages is the last page of his letter to the Romans. That is a page which most persons nowadays skip because it is so crowded with proper names. It contains nothing about the sovereignty of God, or the person of Christ, or the meaning of the atonement, or the immortality of the soul, and therefore it furnishes no grist for the theological mill. But it is one of the most illumining of all Paul's productions. It is a fine illustration of what inspiration can do. No man could write such a chapter unless he had in him the Spirit of God. We do not know these people whom Paul mentions, and therefore we are not especially interested in them, but what he says of them is of vital importance as throwing light on the mind and heart of the Apostle. We come to know him better by the way he treats his friends. Most of these persons were poor and obscure. Several of them were no doubt slaves. Some of them had known little but trou-

ble. If we only knew their circumstances and the hardships they had passed through, this whole chapter would blaze with glory. No other chapter in Paul's letters makes such heavy demands on the imagination as this one. Unless one can visualize the persons whose names Paul has written, one reads the chapter with flagging interest and little profit. The paragraphs when carefully scrutinized are found to be filled with delicate touches which open up Paul's heart in wonderful ways. "Help Phoebe," he writes. "Help her in every way you can. She has been a helper of many, a helper of me." "Give my affectionate regards to Prisca and Aquila. They hazarded their lives for me, and worked long by my side." "Remember me to Persis, who did a lot of hard work, and to Mary who labored so much for us all." "Give my kind regards to Rufus that choice disciple, and also to his mother, she was indeed a mother to me." "Salute Nereus and also his sister, and all the believers who worship with them." He had something good to say of each one. Many of them he calls "fellow-workers." Three of them he calls "beloved." Three are his kinsmen, two are his fellow-prisoners. He does not omit the women. If a man has a sister, he mentions her. If he has a mother, she is not forgotten. If he has a company of Christians worshipping under his roof, the whole company is included in the benediction. If the suffering en-

dured has been exceptional, that fact is made note of. If the labor done has been unusual, that also is called to mind. The first convert in the Province of Asia has a fixed place in his heart, and so also has Apelles who has been tried and found worthy. Paul had a habit of mentioning his friends by name in his prayers: it was natural for him to name them in his letters. But Paul is not the only one whose heart is full of good wishes. Others also desire to send salutations, and so their names are included, Timothy, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, and Gaius, and Erastus, and Quartus, and even Tertius the Scribe. To a modern congregation, the last chapter of Romans is insufferably dull. But how eyes must have sparkled and how hearts must have throbbed when it was read to the congregation in Rome. To the men and women whose names were mentioned, it was the very core of the whole letter. It did more to hearten them in following Jesus, than all Paul's philosophy of salvation.

Paul was considerate of others' feelings. He never willingly hurt anyone. He told the Corinthians that he was staying away from Corinth, because he thought his absence might make it easier for them to settle their cases of discipline. In his letter to the Romans, he carefully guards himself against possible misunderstanding. He had written, "I yearn to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift." But he did not

quite like the sound of that. It sounded a little bumptious, and so he modifies it by adding—"What I mean is that I shall be encouraged by meeting you, I by your faith and you by mine." Near the end of this same letter, he feels that possibly he has written too boldly and may seem a trifle presumptuous, and so he assures his readers that he has had no intention of setting himself above them, for he is certain that they have ample goodness of heart, and an abundance of knowledge, and are fully qualified to give advice to one another. His purpose has been simply to refresh their memory, and if he has written somewhat freely, it is because God had been so good to him as to appoint him a minister to the Gentiles.

He is courteous to strangers and equally courteous to old friends. Familiarity does not breed carelessness in him. In writing to the Philippians he is careful not to seem inappreciative of their kindness. When he writes that it was a great joy to find their mindfulness of him reviving, as was shown in the present which had just been received, he hastens to add, "Your mindfulness of me was of course never lacking; you merely lacked the opportunity of showing it." He does not want them to think that he has been pining for a gift, for he had learned to be content with whatever he might happen to have; but nevertheless he is deeply grateful to them for what

they have sent him, not only for what it means to him, but also for what it means for them. The interest on such an investment, he says, will accumulate to their account. The gift which they have sent him is an odor of sweet fragrance, the sort of sacrifice which God delights in and welcomes.

He is equally delicate and charming in writing to Philemon. He tells him he is not going to order him to do his duty, but prefers to appeal to him on the ground of love to take his runaway slave back. "If he has stolen anything from you," Paul says, "charge it up to me. I will pay you—here is the promise written by my own hand. Of course I might remind you what you owe to me—you owe to me your own soul. Come now and make me some return. Make me happy by treating Onesimus as your own brother."

Paul had no desire to lord it over men's faith. He assured the Corinthians that he did not want to overawe them by his authority. All he desired was to increase their joy in living. His constant aim was to build them up. He was considerate of the rights of others. He did not want any one to be imposed on. He was especially considerate of the consciences of his converts. He revered a man's conscience, and would do nothing to disparage it or stifle its voice. Many of his converts were full of scruples, some of which were foolish. Men and women in his churches were made wretched by misgivings and qualms

which came from a mind painfully making its way toward the light. Paul would not allow any Christian to go contrary to his conscience. If a man thinks a thing is wrong, to him at any rate it is wrong, and he ought not to do it. Moreover a man who has no such scruples should not boast of his superiority and act in such a way as to cause his weaker brother to make shipwreck of his faith. There was endless discussion in the Gentile churches concerning the rightfulness of eating meat which had been exposed in heathen temples. Paul saw that such meat was as harmless as any other meat. The heathen gods had no existence, and how could gods who have no existence contaminate meat offered on their altars?

But Paul was a gentleman, and therefore he was bound to think of the effect of his conduct on his brothers. "When you sin against your brother, you sin against Christ." Of this Paul was certain, and therefore his duty was clear. In his usual impulsive and whole-hearted way, he expressed his attitude in words which are among the best known of all the words which ever came from his lips: "If meat causes my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh while the world stands."

Another manifestation of his courtesy is seen in his fixed policy of keeping away from any field in which another Christian worker had labored. He was unwilling to embarrass any other Chris-

tian minister by trenching on his territory. He was especially careful never to interfere with the work of the Twelve. He never became their rivals, or in any way showed them disrespect. His high sense of honor and delicacy of feeling would not permit him to thrust himself into a place which could rightfully be claimed by another. He had a horror of getting in any man's way. He carefully explains his policy to the Romans, and makes it clear why he is coming to Rome. Rome is not his destination. That City belongs to others. He is going to Spain because no Christian work has yet been done there. "My ambition," he says, "has always been to preach the gospel only in places where there has been no mention of Christ's name, that I might not build on foundations laid by others. I have preached all the way from Jerusalem around to Illyricum, and now as I have no further scope for work in these parts, I am going to Spain, and hope to see you on my way there, and to be sped forward by you after I have enjoyed your company for a season." He strove to keep clear of even the appearance of infringing on the sphere of other workers.

His courtesy led some to misunderstand him. They mistook his gentleness for weakness. They could not believe that a real Apostle could be so considerate and deferential. To the Corinthians he writes: "I appeal to you by the gentleness and considerateness of Christ—the Paul who is hum-

ble enough to your face when he is with you, and outspoken enough when he gets away from you!" That is what his enemies said. It is not easy for a boor to understand the conduct of a gentleman.

Paul was naturally impulsive, but he held himself in. He was by nature forceful, but he restrained his force. He had a high sense of his mission, but he never forgot his manners. He was conscious of his authority, but he did not put on airs. He was a gentleman of Christ's school, and could be courteous to every one from a peasant to a king. His considerateness was made known to all men.

XV

HIS INDIGNATION

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HIS INDIGNATION

No OTHER virtue causes us such perplexity as the virtue of indignation. Sometimes we wonder if it be a virtue at all. The Greeks and Romans did not put it in the list of the cardinal virtues, nor did the Christian Fathers enroll it among the virtues theological. Paul does not include it among the fruits of the spirit, nor is it to be found in any list of the graces.

If we decide that it is really a virtue, we find it difficult to define it. It passes so readily into something else. It can become rage in an instant, and the rage can mount at once to fury, and fury we know is wrong. Or it can sink into mere nervous irritability, a feverish condition of feeble exasperation. It is hard to find it pure. It mixes itself up with other feelings, the feelings of bitterness and hatred and revenge, and these feelings we know are not right. Unalloyed indignation, it is difficult to find.

It hardly seems a virtue, because we do not have to struggle to attain it. It is born in us. Even a child can show anger without instruction.

The youngster can get mad more readily than the man whose hairs are gray. No one needs to strive in order to possess this virtue. It seems to be part of our constitutional outfit, an element in what is known as original sin, an ingredient of the depravity we brought with us into the world.

And yet it must be a virtue for it is Godlike. God is not a stranger to the feeling of indignation. We know this because Jesus is the express image of God. In Jesus we come to know what God is. The mind of Jesus is the mind of God, and the character of Jesus is the character of God. Jesus was a man of indignation. His eyes flashed, his words burned. There were men in Jerusalem who never forgot the glance of his angry eyes. The men who were the nearest to him and who called him holy, often thought of the times when they had seen him angry. They did not hesitate to tell about it in the narratives written for the instruction of all believers.

It may be hard to define just what we mean, but we all feel sure there is such a thing as righteous indignation. We may not be sure that ours is of that variety, but we are certain that in the universe such a feeling has a rightful place. When a just man looks upon an act of injustice something takes fire in him, and that fire we call indignation. When a lover of honor and purity and mercy beholds meanness and vileness and cruelty, a certain protesting feeling surges up in

the heart, and that feeling we name indignation. It is a feeling of displeasure, antagonism and condemnation, and if it does not emerge it is because the heart is degenerate, and the soul has lost its highest powers of feeling. No man has a right to consider himself normal, who can stand in the presence of brutality unmoved. If his soul does not go out hot and strong against the inhuman act, it is because he has ceased to live in the higher ranges of his being. No man can be our hero who is incapable of burning with anger. The flabby and nerveless souls who are indifferent to moral distinctions, and who remain complacent in the presence of manifest wrongs, are moral degenerates, unworthy of a place among men of sound fiber and full statured manhood.

The manhood of Paul was full-orbed. He could burn like a furnace in the presence of the vile deeds of wicked men. Like us he had difficulty sometimes in curbing the fire, and allowed it to burn beyond the limits prescribed. There was a sentence in the Jewish Psalter which gave him a deal of comfort—"Be ye angry and sin not." He often pondered it, and when he was a prisoner in Rome, he quoted it in a letter which he wrote to his friends in Ephesus. He knew what an excitable people they were, and he knew the extent of the vileness and villainy which the great City of Ephesus contained. His own soul had often been stirred to wrath by the bad men

with whom he had contended there, and he remembered the vexatious persons who were found even inside the Ephesian Church. The whole environment was provocative of bad temper, and he reminds them of the exhortation of the old Hebrew poet—"Be ye angry and sin not." There was encouragement in those words. The poet granted one the privilege of being angry, and that was a relief. To be taught that under no circumstances has a man the right to be angry, puts the soul in a position in which it chafes and rebels. The poet felt that one could be angry and not commit sin, but he knew that anger readily becomes sinful, and so he adds, "Sin not." It is a note of warning, and Paul strengthens the warning by adding a word of advice. "Never let the sun set upon your exasperation. Don't give the devil a chance." He had found out from his own experience that when the fire of anger burns too fiercely or too long, other sins are not far away. When one sinks into a state of chronic exasperation, he gives the spirit of evil an opportunity to work its will. In the list of things which he urges the Ephesians to drop, he gives the foremost place to bitter feeling and passion and anger. Having been often tempted himself, he knew how to write to those who also were tempted.

When he instructed Titus concerning the prime qualifications of a Bishop, he wrote: "He must

not be presumptuous or hot-tempered." Paul knew that a man responsible for the spiritual growth of congregations must not become angry easily. If he does, he is likely to be angry most of the time. Something is always going wrong, somebody is always trying his patience, new exhibitions of pettiness and meanness and hypocrisy are constantly coming into view, and while a religious leader must have a heart capable of flaming, he must not allow the flame to burn him up. We get light on Paul's interior life by the advice which he gave to others.

One of the most dramatic episodes in Paul's whole career, was his outburst of anger before the Council in Jerusalem. It occurred at the very beginning of his trial. He had begun his testimony by saying that he had lived with a perfectly good conscience before God down to the present day. That was too much for the High Priest. In a paroxysm of fury, he ordered some one standing next to Paul to strike him on the mouth. The order was a dastardly one, and it set Paul ablaze. That a prisoner should be slapped in the face in a Court of Justice by the order of one of his judges, was an atrocity which filled Paul with rage. The heat of the fire is a revelation of the man. We should never have known Paul so well had it not been for that outbreak of passion. That was a flash of lightning in the glare of which his soul stands out sharply featured. In

the twinkling of an eye, the thunderbolt was launched—"God shall smite you, you whited wall! You sit there to judge me by the law, do you? And you break the law by ordering me to be struck!" The words sent a thrill of horror through every one present. No Jew for generations had ever dared to talk to a High Priest like that. Only in anger can a man heat his words so hot. It was the injustice of the act which stung Paul to madness. What a disgrace to suffer a ruffian to act as a Judge. What a shame to the nation if such an outrage were not rebuked. Paul immediately apologized for his words, but he could not take them back. What he had spoken he had spoken, and to the end of time men will read them, and in reading them will feel the heat of a man who although an Apostle of Jesus Christ was capable of fiery indignation.

It was not the personal insult which Paul most resented. The physical sting of a slap on the mouth will not account for his anger. Some men become angry only over wrongs to themselves. It is when their own rights are trampled on, that they cry out in fierce protestation. But wrongs suffered by others could set Paul immediately on fire. He looked after his converts with the solicitude of a mother. Any one who hurt them hurt him. He had the same feeling for his converts which Jesus had for his disciples. Men could never forget the white heat of the

words, "Whoso shall cause one of these little ones who believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck and that he should be sunk in the depths of the sea." With a similar love, Paul followed his converts. When he tells the Corinthians of the burdens he carries on his heart, he mentions the wrongs done to his converts. "Which of them"—he says—"is caused to stumble and I do not burn with indignation." His enemies were always trying to steal them away, always working to break down their faith, always scheming to entice them into sin, and his great soul glowed with anger. When the high ones of the earth ordered his converts to be struck on the mouth, he was as swift in resentment as though his own mouth had been smitten.

He was moved to wrath by the men who perverted the meaning of the Christian message. They emptied the Gospel of its divine content. They hounded him from city to city, telling lies. They were like bloodhounds, and could not be thrown off the scent. The meanness of their slanders, and the despicable methods they made use of to blacken his name, raised his wrath to such a pitch that he sometimes used language which is harsh and almost coarse. "Beware of these dogs," he wrote to the Philippians. He was at that time a prisoner in Rome, but in his solitude he could hear the yelping of the dogs

All over Asia Minor, they were barking and their teeth were sharp and their jaws were hungry. Dogs in the orient did not enjoy the reputation and the privileges of dogs in Christian lands today, and when one man called another man a dog, he used a word which men in ordinary moods were slow to take upon their lips. It was generally in anger that men called one another dogs.

The hottest of all Paul's letters is his letter to the Galatians. Luther was right when he said that Paul's words in this letter are fierce flame and that he begins, so to speak, by cursing the angels. He curses everybody who does not accept his interpretation of the Gospel. The Judaizers have by their misrepresentations upset the faith of some of his Galatian converts, and his soul is aroused. He writes with fever heat. His language flows like a torrent. The whole letter is like a thunderstorm. He scolds, he pleads, he denounces, he exhorts, he argues, he asserts dogmatically, all in a whirlwind of emotion. "O senseless Galatians, who has bewitched you? I simply want to ask you one thing, did you receive the Spirit by doing what the Law commands, or by believing the Gospel message? Are you such fools? He who unsettles you will have to meet his doom, no matter who he is!" From the first sentence—"Paul an Apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father," down to the last sentence, "Henceforth, let no

man trouble me," one feels he is reading the words of a man so mad that he can scarcely keep his language from exploding.

One finds something of this same spirit of indignation in his second letter to the Corinthians. There it finds vent in irony and sarcasm. Paul is stung by the criticisms and slanders of his Corinthian opponents, and he sweeps them aside with gestures of scorn. The unjustness of the things they are saying stirs him to wrath.

Of all the adversaries who excited Paul's anger, Elymas probably deserves the foremost place. Elymas was an astrologer who lived in Paphos on the island of Cyprus. Although he was a Jew, he was in the retinue of the Roman Proconsul there. In those days it was believed that the stars have much to do with the lives of men, and that human destiny can be read in the constellations. Such a belief gave the charlatans a chance. They went everywhere claiming to possess knowledge which they sold at high prices. Human nature loves to be gulled, and therefore in every generation the number of impostors is legion. When Barnabas and Paul came to Paphos, they were invited to state their new doctrines in the house of the Proconsul, and Elymas of course was present. He interrupted the Christian preachers and scoffed at them, doing his utmost to keep the Proconsul from accepting the new faith. Paul could not long put up with his

insolent interruptions. He could bear the opposition of honest men with compassionate patience, but he could not be patient with an arrogant rogue. Elymas was probably the first man of this stripe whom Paul had yet encountered. He and Barnabas were just starting on their first missionary journey, and at the very threshold they are confronted by this impudent impostor. How Barnabas felt we are not told, but the soul of Paul waxed hot. He came down upon the voluble cheat without mercy. In glowing indignation, he fastens his flashing eyes on the culprit and tells him plainly what he is. Anger often gives fresh power to the tongue, and Paul was never more successful than on this occasion in using language highly expressive. "You mass of trickery and rascality," that is the way Paul begins, and he follows it up with another shot—"You son of the Devil," and not content with that he hastens to add—"You enemy of everything that is right, will you never stop diverting the straight paths of the Lord?" And then in a solemn tone, Paul announces to the discomfited wretch, that he is going to be blind for a season. The very statement seemed to put a mist over the rogue's eyes. Realizing that he had never had to deal with a man like Paul before, he begins to grope about for some one to take him by the hand. Paul abhorred sorcerers and wizards, as-

trologers and fortune tellers, quacks of every kind. The world of Paul's day swarmed with conjurors and tricksters, knaves and pretenders, scamps of every description who played on the credulity of the ignorant and superstitious people. Elymas was the distinguished representative of a large class. It was necessary that he be dealt with severely, that his punishment might be a warning to all cheats everywhere. A professing Christian had once fallen dead in church in Jerusalem at the feet of Peter who accused him of lying, and now a liar outside the church loses for a season the use of his eyes. In a universe like this, built upon truth, in which everything depends on men's willingness to believe and speak the truth, what a monster a man is who earns his living by making and selling lies. It is the lover of truth whose soul rises in fierce and implacable antagonism to men who deceive. If we are not so hot as Paul, it is because we are not so noble as he.

Whether the sun ever set on Paul's anger, we do not know, but we are sure it never degenerated into chronic vexation or personal spite. It never became that ugly thing which we call revenge. It was the scorching protest to falsehood and wrong of a soul in passionate love with the truth. He told Timothy that the hands which men hold up in prayer, must be free from anger

and dissension, and he spoke to the whole world when he wrote to the Romans: "Never revenge yourselves, beloved, but let the wrath of God have its way."

XVI

HIS TENDERNESS

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The severity of Paul has given offence to many. But his severity, strange to say, was due to his tenderness. If he had not been so gentle and affectionate, he would not have been so stern. There is nothing so austere and relentless as indignant love.

Whether Paul was tender-hearted in his pre-Christian days, we do not know. All we know about him in those days is that he was a persecutor of those who believed in Jesus, and a persecutor engaged in the extermination of what he thinks is a pestiferous heresy can never be soft and gentle. As a persecutor, Paul, like all persecutors, was harsh and cruel. He seemed to be devoid of pity. When men were whipped and put to death, he apparently felt no compunction. So far as we know, he was untouched by the death of Stephen. Neither the face nor the prayer of that dying man moved him. He plunged forthwith into the work which the murderers of Stephen had begun. But the face and prayer of Stephen no doubt left a mark on him.

He could not forget them. They lived with him. Years afterward, he told Luke all about them. When Luke says that those who sat in the Council saw Stephen's face "as it had been the face of an angel," he is no doubt quoting the language of Paul. Stephen's face shone as he faced his accusers, and Paul never forgot what a beautiful face it was. It did not soften him, but it haunted him. Nor did he ever forget Stephen's dying prayer, or the long address which preceded it. That address is the most complete discourse reported in the Book of the Acts, and the completeness is due, probably, to the retentive memory of Paul. He listened to it with both ears, and it never faded from his mind. The prayer which Stephen offered just before his eyes closed in death, lived in Paul's memory forever afterward. "Lord Jesus receive my spirit. Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." How could he ever forget that prayer? Those words did not move Paul at the time; they sank into his mind there to remain forever.

It was not the face or the voice of Stephen which softened Paul's heart, but the face and voice of Jesus. It was the sweetness of Jesus' face and the tenderness of his voice which took away Paul's heart of stone and gave him a heart of flesh. From the hour in which he met Jesus near the Damascus gate, Paul was the incarnation of tenderness. The secret of the change

comes out in the sweetest of all Paul's exhortations: "Be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you."

In his treatment of his co-workers, Paul was generous and warm-hearted. He was especially fond of Timothy. He called Timothy his son, his child, his boy, his dear boy. "You know," he wrote to the Philippians, "how he stood the test, how he has served with me in the Gospel, like a son helping his father." Paul was proud of him and solicitous about him. He was always afraid that some one would hurt his sensitive and shrinking heart. He urges the Corinthians to be good to him, to make him feel at home, and not to allow any one to disparage him, because he is engaged in the very same work in which Paul himself is engaged. "When he leaves you, speed him cordially on his way, for I shall be looking for him"—thus writes the affectionate Apostle. He tried to guard Timothy from being imposed upon, not only by exhortations to others but by advice to Timothy himself. "Hold up your head, my boy, and do not let others slight you just because you are young." Timothy's health was frail, and this also made Paul anxious. In one of his letters, he suggests a remedy which he hopes Timothy will try. We may not think highly of the remedy, but we are bound to think highly of the heart which suggested it. It was the best

and only remedy which Paul knew, and if a man offers his best, what more is possible?

Sickness among his friends weighed upon Paul's heart. In one of his letters he tells how anxious he was once about Epaphroditus. Epaphroditus was very ill. Every one thought he was going to die. The Philippians heard of this, and it made them anxious, and when Epaphroditus grew better, he became anxious because his friends in Philippi were worrying about him, and he yearned to get home as quickly as possible. Paul had been solicitous both for the man and his friends. He felt that Epaphroditus' recovery was providential. To use Paul's own language—"God had mercy on him and on me that I might not have one sorrow upon another. I am especially eager to send him, that you may be glad when you see him again, and thus my own anxiety be lightened." And thus do we get a deep glimpse into the heart life of Paul and his friends.

Paul had not power to heal the physical maladies of himself or of those who were dear to him. He did not know what others think they have discovered, that such a power is an indispensable part of the equipment of a minister of Jesus Christ. He recognized sickness as an obvious and stubborn fact of human experience, and he made no effort to explain it away, or to camouflage its existence by inventing a set of novel and fan-

tastic terms. He would never allow plain and undeniable facts to be shoved aside by fine theories which can only confuse and deceive. When his body was sick, he was not ashamed to say so, nor was he ashamed to say that he could not cure it by prayer. He was sure that God was friendly to him, and was willing to do for him everything which could wisely be done, and when, therefore, God refused to answer his prayers for bodily healing, he accepted the answer without complaining. He was not a whit behind the greatest of the Apostles, but he could not cure either himself or his friends. Like other men, he had to submit to the inevitable, and physical illness was one of the burdens which he submissively bore. One can almost hear the sigh of his heart in the words he wrote to Timothy in his last letter. "I left Trophimus ill at Miletus." He wanted him to come with him, but the poor man was too sick to come. He needed him in Rome, but a sick man can render no help. He had counted on his companionship and assistance, only to be disappointed. Paul had to go on without him, and thus was there added another anxiety to his already overburdened heart.

How tenderly he speaks of Mark, the John Mark, the son of the sister of Barnabas, who once on a critical occasion had played the coward, and compelled Paul to feel that he could not be trusted in the doing of a difficult and danger-

ous piece of work. That was when Mark was young, and in later years Mark had washed out his early disgrace. He had proved by faithful service that he was a man to be trusted, and so Paul gave him his confidence again. "Give Mark a welcome," Paul writes to the Colossians. He was afraid that the memories of the earlier days might be lingering in the air, and that the Colossians might turn to Mark a cold shoulder. "Don't do it," writes the Apostle; "give him a welcome, he is a man worthy of your trust and affection." In his last letter to Timothy, he says—"Pick up Mark and bring him along with you." Mark had once hindered Paul, but now he can help him. Once he was a handicap, but now he can be of great service. "Bring Mark along with you"—the words remind one of the words of Jesus to the women—"Go tell my disciples, and Peter." Peter, the man who had sinned and brought disgrace on himself and weakness to the cause, that is the man to whom the women are sent. They are to carry the glad mesage to all of the Twelve, and especially to the man who is so overwhelmed with remorse, that he does not expect any message at all. "Go tell Peter!" And so now does Paul say to his son Timothy—"Come to me as soon as you can, and bring Mark along with you." If Paul was too harsh with the young man when he stumbled and fell, the compassionate heart of the aged Apostle now opens wide and

takes him in. Paul knew how to forgive and forget.

Paul loved his converts with a tender affection. He called them—"My beloved," "My dearly beloved," which in our language means "My dears." They were all dear to him. Even in the severest of his letters—the letter to the Galatians he exclaims: "O, my dear children with whom I am in travail over again till Christ be formed within you, would that I could be with you at this moment!"

To hurt any of his converts gave him deep pain. Sometimes it was necessary for him to say severe things, but these sharp words hurt him more than the people to whom they were written. He wrote an austere letter one day to the Church in Corinth, and later on he said this: "I wrote to you in sore distress and anguish of heart with many tears, not to pain you but to convince you of my love, my special love for you." Later on he refers to that letter again: "If I did pain you by that letter, I do not regret it. I did regret it when I found that my letter had pained you even for the time being, but I am glad now—not glad that you were pained, but glad that your pain induced you to repent."

The tears of Paul are a medium of revelation. They must be considered along with his words. They may not teach doctrine, but they reveal personality. They may not assist in working out a

dogma, but they carry us deep into the heart of an Apostle, into the heart of the Eternal. Tears are indeed words—words of the heart. They speak to all who have ears to hear. It is through his tears that we come to know Paul's innermost soul. The thought of hurting people made him weep. The man who once condemned men to death without wincing, is now so sensitive that the act of giving even a momentary pain draws tears from his eyes. He sees so clearly the dire results of wrong living, and is so eager to save men, that when he exhorts them, and they refuse to heed his exhortation, he cannot hold back the tears. To the Ephesian elders, he said, "Do not forget that for three whole years I did not cease to admonish every one night and day with tears."

Paul and Peter are the only two Apostles, of whom it is written that they wept. Peter wept over his own sins. Paul wept over the sins of others. His tears are like unto the tears of the Son of God. As Jesus wept over Jerusalem, so did Paul weep over the cities in which he preached.

It was not his converts only whom Paul carried on his heart. His solicitude went out to all men, no matter how rebellious and wicked. In the solitude of his Roman confinement, he often thinks of the men who are going to perdition, and as he thinks of them, tears rain down his cheeks. He cannot write a letter without crying. To the

Philippians, he says—"Many, as I have often told you and tell you now with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Destruction is their fate, the belly is their god, they glory in their shame—these men of earthly minds!"

The Jewish race was dear to his heart. The venomous opposition of individual Jews never hardened it. The suffering of cruel persecution through many years never soured the milk of human kindness in him. To the Romans he wrote: "I tell you God's truth, when I say that I have great sorrow and increasing pain in my heart. I could wish myself accursed and banished from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my natural kinsmen, for they are Israelites, theirs is the Sonship, the glory, the covenants, the divine legislation, the worship and the promises: the patriarchs are theirs, and theirs too (so far as natural descent goes) is the Christ." Close contact with the harsh world often makes the heart hard. Misunderstanding and ingratitude when long continued have a tendency to dry up the springs of the soul. Some men are turned to flint by suffering. It was not so with Paul. Tears are often in his eyes, because there is a divine tenderness in his heart.

His patient kindness in dealing with his churches is one of the most beautiful phenomena which the New Testament has to show. He looked upon his converts as his children. All of

them belonged to him. Timothy was his son, and so also was Titus, and so also was the poor slave Onesimus. All the men were his brothers and all the women were his sisters, and he, because of his age and spiritual knowledge, was a father to them all. "We treated each of you as a father treats his children"—so he writes to the Thessalonians—"beseeching you, encouraging you, and charging you to lead a life worthy of the God who called you to his kingdom and glory." He was even more than a father. He was a mother, too. "We behaved gently when we were among you"—he says—"like a nursing mother cherishing her own children, fain, in our yearning affection for you, to impart not only the Gospel of God to you, but our very souls as well, you had so won our love." No matter how obstreperous and exasperating his converts were, he meekly continued his work. He makes his thoughts comprehensible to pagan minds, he makes his doctrines credible to Jewish minds, he softens the prejudices of the bigoted, and shows the emptiness of popular superstitions, he allays unreasonable fears, and inspires flagging hopes, he respects foolish scruples, and administers strength to the faint-hearted, he tones down the conceited, and holds in check the autocratic, and works day and night to rescue those who because of their ancestry and inherited dispositions and habits, keep slipping back into the sins of the world around them. His converts are

indeed nothing but children, and he, like a patient father, teaches them to think and tells them how they ought to feel, and trains them in the right ways of acting. He expounds to them the fine art of living together, and of working together for the attainment of high ends, and he does it all with a gentleness and tenderness which remind us of the patience and delicacy of Christ.

His conscience was as sensitive as his heart was tender. The work which he did as a persecutor did not trouble him at the time. It troubled him later on. When we hear him call himself the "chief of sinners," his language sounds exaggerated and absurd. We wonder at first how he could make use of language so wild, but when we see the stream of thought from which this confession emerges, we understand why he feels as he does. He has been brooding over the old days when he was a blasphemer and a persecutor. The hideous past comes back again. He sees the backs of the men who were whipped. He sees the pleading eyes of the men thrust into prison. He hears again the words of quivering lips which he had compelled to blaspheme the name of Jesus. He sees the pallid, hopeless faces of those who were led out to death, and when that company of men and women whom he has wronged stand round about him, he falls upon his face, declaring that he is the "chief of sinners." His conscience has grown sensitive with the years,

and he is now reverent in the presence of the consciences of other men. The conscience is too sacred for any man to interfere with the conscience of any other man. Every man answers to God and to God alone for what he thinks and feels and does. Only God is competent to deal with anything so divine as conscience. When we see the Apostle moving about among the consciences of his converts with revrent step and careful touch, we are reminded of the gracious gentleness of one of whom it was written that "a bruised reed he would not break, and that a smoking wick he would not quench." The vision of the gentle-hearted Jesus had made the heart of Paul tender, and when he makes an inventory of the harvest of the spirit, we find that he has written among other things, "love and kindliness and gentleness and self-control."

XVII

HIS BREADTH AND NARROWNESS

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On a hasty view, one would say that Paul lived a narrow life. He claimed that all things belong to us, but he never availed himself of many of them. There is no evidence that he took the slightest interest in art. His eyes, so far as we are able to judge, did not revel in statuary or architecture. He apparently took no delight in music or painting. He was, so far as we know, indifferent to the masterpieces of Greek genius. He probably felt no interest in science. Scientific investigation did not appeal to him. It is safe to assume he was not a student of astronomy or botany, of natural history or physiology. The processes of the world of nature did not quicken his curiosity or occupy his mind. He cared little for philosophy, and at times spoke slightingly of it, or at least, of those forms of it which came under his notice. We have no proof that he ever gave any thought to business, or to the anxieties and perplexities of business men. In none of his letters does he seem to be conscious of the exist-

ence of the business world. Nor is he interested in politics. The whole realm of civil government lies beyond his concern. Rulers and statesmen and diplomats move in a world into which he scarcely looks. He was not fond of sport. He knew, of course, that in every Greek city, there were at certain seasons of the year, foot races and boxing contests, but we cannot imagine him being interested in these Greek games. That whole world was to him only a fading wreath. He was not greatly interested even in family life. He had to take notice of the domestic perplexities in other men's homes, but he did not want a home of his own. He was a bachelor or a widower, and he did not envy the lot of any married man.

He was wrapped up in just one thing—the Church. In it he lived and moved and had his being. Everything else was subsidiary and comparatively insignificant. It was only to one branch of Church work that he gave his whole heart, the work of preaching. He was a preacher and nothing more. The sacramental side of religion did not stir his enthusiasm. The religions of the Gentile world had sickened him out of all that. He accepted Baptism and the Lord's supper as beneficial rites, but to administer these was not his special vocation. He had but one work to do and that was to preach. Now and then he baptized a convert, but it made such a slight impression on him that, on his own confession, he

could hardly remember just who the persons were. He gave himself up to preaching. "Woe is me if I do not preach!" He tried to make preachers out of the ablest of the young men who came under his influence. "Preach the word; be urgent in season, and out of season!" That was his exhortation, and it comes ringing across the centuries with such arresting power, that even today ministers of Jesus are quickened by it. The supreme work in this world—he thought—is preaching. He had but one mission, and that was to preach. He had only one ambition, to be the kind of man God wanted him to be. He had but one aim, to make progress in his knowledge of God. He had but one joy, the joy of completing his course. He had but one desire for the next world, and that was to be with Christ. He lived a narrow life.

His world was as short as it was narrow. He saw the end of all things earthly only a little distance ahead of him. This colored a large part of his teaching. It accounts in a measure for his constant use of the word "Obey." To all citizens he said, "Obey the civil officials." To all wives he said, "Obey your husband." To all slaves he said, "Obey your master." To every one he said—"Stay where you are. Be content where you are. Serve God where you are."

In this way, Paul's life and words become misleading. Good men in their desire to become

like him have turned their back upon science and philosophy and art, upon business and politics and amusements, some of them even on married life itself. Everything not connected openly with religion has been condemned as worldly and dangerous. Under the influence of Paul, men have become monks and hidden themselves completely from the world. Others have not gone into a cell or a cave, but have carried the monastic idea into their life. Listening to Paul's exhortation, "Come out from among them and be ye separate," they have refused to have anything to do with politics, or to take part in any moral reform, or to give support to any movement for the advance of education or science or art. Nothing has been of moment to them but the saving of their own soul.

Under the guidance of Paul, men have pushed the doctrine of obedience to disastrous extremes. They have urged submission to despots no matter how tyrannical, and obedience to husbands no matter how inhuman, and obedience to slave owners no matter how cruel, and have all the while claimed that they were following the instructions of Paul.

Under the sway of Paul's letters, devout men have become afraid of philosophy, and hostile to science and suspicious of art, and exceedingly wrathful against every form of amusement. If the Church is frequently accused of narrow-

mindedness and bigotry, it is because of the attitude of men and women who have been misguided by Paul.

But Paul must not be blamed for all the eccentricities and blunderings of his disciples. His disciples have drawn mistaken inferences from what he said and did. Paul was a preacher and like most sensible men, he stuck to his work. The higher the work the greater the necessity for concentration. Because Paul was a preacher, he could not do anything else. But only a few men are called to be preachers, and therefore most men can never live like Paul. Humanity cannot get on without artists and scientists and philosophers and business men and statesmen and actors and singers and lawyers and doctors and teachers and authors and artisans and farmers and miners and sailors and cooks, and each man must give himself up completely to the work to which he is called. The world would be insipid and impossible if all men lived the life of Paul. All men cannot live the life of Raphael, or Wagner, or Sir Christopher Wren, or Kant, or Gladstone, or Pasteur, or Edwin Booth, or Caruso. Every man must live his own life. Paul lived his, and we must live ours. In order to do his work well, Paul had to give up many things as every man must do, no matter what his work is. If Paul gave up science and art, it does not follow that all men must give them up. Because he had no

time for amusements, we are not to conclude that amusements are of the devil, and are to be banished from the earth.

Furthermore, advice given to one generation is not necessarily good for all time. What Paul said when Christians were few and without influence becomes mischievous if repeated when Christians are numbered by the millions and hold in their hands a large part of the wealth and power of the world. It is sinful to be content when conditions are corrupt and can be changed. It is a disgrace to continue a corrupt government when that government can be reformed. Why allow an iniquitous institution to survive when there are enough Christian men and women to overthrow it? Every religious teacher must talk to his own age. Paul talked to the first century, and it was sensible talk. When we read the New Testament wisely, we discard the paragraphs which the world has outgrown, retaining only the teachings which contain guidance for us.

It is not the form of Paul's life but the soul of it, not the letter of his words but the spirit of them, which we are to treasure and follow. Even Jesus of Nazareth is not to be copied. We follow him only when we have his spirit. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus——" so wrote Paul to the Philippians, and his exhortation is good for all time. Through the ages, the world will be in need of men who

take upon them the form of a servant, and who, humbling themselves, become obedient unto God all the way to death.

When we get the mind of Paul, we have a mind which is broad. He is the broadest minded man mentioned in the Bible. It was his broad mindedness which brought upon him the execration of his countrymen. The crowd in the Temple court listened patiently to him until he said that he had been sent by heaven to the Gentiles, and then they began to howl—"Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live." And as they screamed and yelled, they tore off their outer clothing, and threw dust into the air like men bereft of reason. Paul had offended their narrow hearts. His outlook was broad. He carried the whole world in his eye. "I want to go to Spain," he said, and Spain was the very end of the earth. Beyond Spain there was nothing but darkness, and a sea without a shore. His spirit roamed constantly over all the lands, dreaming of a new world order. No wonder he was inexplicable to the bigots who opposed him.

His mind was wonderfully hospitable. He could make room for the new and still have space for the old. He could become a Christian and remain a Pharisee. He could be true to Christ and still love the old Jewish festivals and time honored ceremonies. He could be a faithful fol-

lower of Jesus, and still shave his head, and take his place as a Nazarite in the Temple. Few men attain such breadth. When they give up the old, they scoff at it. Paul never sneered at the things which he outgrew. The religion of his fathers was always sacred to him.

He was so broad that he could sympathize with men whose ideas he could not share, and whose conduct he could not approve. He was broad enough to be respectful toward narrow men. He never boasted—as some men did and do—of his breadth. He showed how broad he was by the kind of life he lived.

His mind was capacious enough to take in all schools of Christian thought. There were four parties in the Church in Corinth—one of Paul, one of Apollos, one of Cephas, and one of Christ. Each party extolled a truth, and each party had a leader who was worthy of trust. Paul could take in all the truths and all the leaders, feeling that all belonged to him. Why confine oneself to a single leader or to a solitary aspect of truth, when all leaders exist for the service of all who are willing to use them, and when every truth is a part of the property which belongs to every man?

The great Aristotle spoke contemptuously of woman. Paul never did. His broad mind took her in. He gave her an honored place in the Church, and also in his own heart. Some of his

best friends and most capable helpers were women.

Paul did not draw the line at slaves. He took them in also. His heart was so big that even a thieving and vagabond slave could come in. He had room for all classes from the highest to the lowest. "I am debtor," he said "to Greeks and Barbarians, both to the educated and the uneducated." He knew he had gotten good from all classes, and therefore he would pay his debt to all.

He was the friend of all races. There was not a trace of racial prejudice in his heart. All racial distinctions had vanished from his eye. "There is no room," he was in the habit of saying, "for Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave or freeman, Christ is everything and everywhere." Behold the man! a member of the most illiberal party of the most exclusive tribe of the most bigoted race on the face of the earth, the son of religious intolerance and racial pride—with the doors of his heart wide open, glad to receive as his brothers all sorts and conditions of men!

The wide sweep of Paul's comprehensive mind is strikingly disclosed in three of his sermons reported by Luke. Luke, being a Gentile, was always peculiarly impressed by the catholicity of Paul's mind. In his sermon in Antioch in Pisidia, Paul shows how Christianity is the completion of Judaism. What was promised by the Prophets

is in Jesus fulfilled. Jesus is the consummation of the hope of the Jewish race. There is no opposition between Judaism and Christianity—one is the bud and the other the flower.

In Lystra, Paul is preaching to the worshippers of Jupiter. He assumes that the people of Lystra have enjoyed a divine revelation. In the rains and fruitful seasons, in the manifold blessings which are showered on human hearts and homes, God keeps on testifying of his goodness. Paul's aim is to turn their minds to the living God who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is. Here again, Christianity is represented as the consummation of the revelation which has already been made in part to the people to whom he is preaching.

In Athens, Paul recognizes the revelation of God to the Greek mind. God is indeed in one sense high above and away from the world as the Epicureans have taught, and in another sense he is immanent in the world as the Stoics have always maintained. He speaks often through poets, and Epimenides and Aratus have given expression to fundamental religious truths. But Paul would carry his hearers farther. He would unfold a truth which the Athenians did not yet know. His doctrine is the fulfilment of an age-long human yearning after God. Paul's mind was so far reaching and so generous, that he could recognize the truths of all religions, and

could see in them anticipations of the full truth in Christ. In his gracious broad-mindedness, in his intellectual hospitality, and in his courteous recognition of the truths imbedded in other faiths, he remains an example for all time for the preachers of Christianity to follow.

It is by his breadth that he makes a special appeal to our generation. In his broad-mindedness and broad-heartedness, he is an anointed messenger of God to our times. The curse of our day is the narrow mind and the contracted heart. Men are too narrow to do the vast work which God has given them to do. We are disgraced by our ecclesiastical bigotries and sectarianisms. Our ideas are too often parochial, and our ambitions are often pitiably petty. Grown men act too often like children, and the controversies and rivalries which agitate the Church are for the most part the product of minds which are one-sided and of hearts which are stunted. We need Paul to come with his largeness, and shame us out of our narrow thoughts and ways.

We are plagued by our partisanship. Civil government is constantly handicapped by the narrow-mindedness of its servants. It limps and halts because men persist in placing the victory of party above the good of all. We need to sit at the feet of Paul and learn that all political leaders have a service to render, and that the nation has need of the gifts of them all.

We are tormented by class antagonisms. Labor is arrayed against capital, and capital against labor. The rich look down on the poor with condescension, and the poor look up to the rich in scorn. The educated sneer at the unschooled, and the ignorant sniff at the cultured. Prophets have gone forth to preach a class war. We need to have Paul tell us again—that "if one member suffers all the members suffer with it, or if one member is honored all the members rejoice with it."

We are cursed by race prejudices. They burn like hell-fire in the blood of the people. They are scorching hot in every Christian land. We need the teacher who will say to us, "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

The very existence of civilization is jeopardized by our national suspicions and hatreds. Nations are so afraid of one another, that they weight themselves down with armor. Patriotism is too often little more than hatred of foreign countries. The man who is fond of any country but his own, is suspected of having the heart of a traitor. We need the saving influence of the great-hearted Paul, the man who loved all classes and all nations and all races, because Christ died for them all.

It was Paul's breadth, then, which caused him

to be narrow. His life was made narrow, because his heart was so broad. The reason he counted so many things as refuse and dross, was because he had a whole world to serve. He concentrated every ounce of his strength and every hour of the day upon the one work of preaching, because of his eagerness to tell all the nations of the wonder of God's love in Christ. He walked along a narrow path that he might bring mankind out into a place that is large. Like his Master, he had a baptism to be baptized with, and he was straitened—contracted, hemmed in—till it was accomplished.

XVIII

HIS SYMPATHY

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By sympathy is meant fellow-feeling. We sympathize with a person when we feel with him, when we share his feelings no matter what they are. We put ourselves in his place, and his experience repeats itself in us. This is sympathy in the full meaning of the word. But words sometimes lose a part of their original content, and our word "sympathy" is gradually becoming poorer. It is coming to mean pity. Pity is a form of sympathy extended in one direction only, in the direction of the weak, and the weak is the inferior. We pity those who are below us, the poor, the unfortunate, the outcast, the victims of vice, all who are overwhelmed by affliction. We pity animals in pain, and a bird with a broken wing. We sympathize when we enter into another's feelings, whether that person is below us or above us, or whether the experience is joyous or sad. Sympathy goes up as well as down. We ought to sympathize with the rich in their prosperity, and with the successful in their victory,

and with the robust in their health, and with the strong in their might. Paul is exhorting us to sympathy when he says—"Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep." Sympathy laughs as well as cries, sings as well as sobs. But not thus is the word "sympathy" used in our current speech. We sympathize only with those who are in trouble. We sympathize at funerals and not at weddings. If a man inherits a fortune, we do not tell him we sympathize with him, but if he loses a child, we assure him of our sympathy. The feeling which goes out toward the strong and successful and jubilant is not called sympathy: only the feeling which goes out to the bereaved, the defeated and the sad-hearted.

Paul was sympathetic in the full-toned sense of that word. He felt with men below him, and also with men above him. His heart went out to peasants and also to kings. He had an experiencing nature. He penetrated the lives of others. He lived a thousand lives and died a thousand deaths. It was his intense sympathy which caused him to bleed when his converts suffered. "Who is weak and I am not weak?" When he saw his converts overwhelmed by the pitiless forces of the world, his own strength went out of him, and he lay prostrate by their side. "Who is caused to stumble and I burn not?" He could not see a man or woman wronged without smarting un-

der the wrong himself. He identified himself so completely with others, that in their joy he was radiant, and in their grief he was distressed. "It is life to me now"—he writes to the Thessalonians, "if ye stand firm in the Lord. How can I render thanks enough to God for you, for all the joy you make me feel in the presence of our God?"

His sympathy was as broad as it was intense. Many men have keen sympathies, but they move within a narrow circle. The illness of any member of their own household fills them with painful anxiety. The misfortune of any of their friends casts a deep gloom over their heart. But by what goes on outside the circle of those to whom they are immediately related, their soul is unmoved. The sufferings of the great world do not darken their sky. Not so was it with Paul. His sympathies went out to the North and the South, to the East and the West, and they traveled far. Some men cannot sympathize across class lines. It is the people of their own class who enlist their concern. Others cannot feel vividly across national boundaries. Their sympathies stop at the national frontier. They feel keenly the tribulations of their own countrymen; foreigners live in a world beyond their reach. The sympathies of some men are so weak, that they cannot travel across differences of opinion. To the members of their own Church or their own

party, they give a sympathetic ear, but to all others they are deaf. For them to enter into the viewpoint of another, or to appreciate his feelings and convictions is impossible. Only a few can sympathize with an avowed enemy. An enemy is painted black as Satan. Whatever he thinks or feels or says or does, is born of hell. His misfortunes do not call forth commiseration, but induce satisfaction and secret joy.

Paul had a fellow feeling with all classes of human beings. He felt at home everywhere. To the Jews he became a Jew. He never forgot how a Jew felt. He could look upon the world out of a Jew's eyes. He could feel with a Jew when a a Jew opposed the religion of Jesus, because he had once opposed this religion himself. To them who were under the law, he became as under the law. He himself was no longer under the law. He had ceased to feel the binding force of the Mosaic legislation, but he could appreciate the feelings of the men who were still under it, and though he could not share their convictions, he could understand their position.

His sympathy did not stop with the Jews. He felt with the Gentiles also. Although not a Gentile himself, he could imagine how a Gentile must feel. The Gentile heredity and environment produced instincts and impulses and standards unlike those of the Jews, but Paul had so much human nature in him that he could interpret the Gentile

disposition and share in the Gentile perplexities and admirations. To them who were outside the law, he became as one who was also outside, taking his place by the side of his Gentile convert, acknowledging him as his brother. Strong men are not always patient with the weak. The man with the flabby will, the man with the foolish scruples, the man with the groundless fears, the man with fluctuating ambitions and purposes, the man with endless shrinkings and hesitations, these are men who try the soul of the man who is strong. But to the weak, Paul became weak. He always said—"We who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." There is no severer test of sympathy than the foibles and crotchety exactions of those who lack strength. Paul's heart went out to the weak. They were young children just beginning to walk. They could not take long steps, and so he shortened his step in order that he might walk by their side. They could not understand long words, and so he used short words just as mothers do with their children. They were frightened by shadows, and distressed by trifles, but he bore with them and entered into all their perplexities and distresses.

To the Greek Paul became as a Greek, to a Roman as a Roman, to a Galatian as a Galatian, to a Pharisee as a Pharisee, to a Sanhedrist as a Sanhedrist, to a philosopher as a philosopher, to a peasant as a peasant, and to a king as a king,

talking to the monarch in a royal way, and saying, "I wish you were the man I am—all except these chains around my wrists." Paul sympathized with Agrippa, because although a Jew and a king, he had not yet seen the light.

He sympathized with the poor benighted idolators of pagan lands. Their foolish beliefs and superstitious rites did not fill him with disgust or drive him away. On the other hand, these drew him to them. He felt with them in their yearnings and wanderings, and his compassion was so deep that he was willing to give his life to helping them.

He sympathized with the Athenian philosophers. He knew what philosophy could do and not do, what the poets had seen and not seen, what culture had to give and what it lacked, what the Greek mind had discovered and what lay beyond its ken, and when he looked upon Athens with all its schools and its teachers, he was moved with compassion, and attempted to enlighten its darkness. He knew that the Greek heart, like every other heart, was hungry for God, and the tragedy of their failure to find him was confessed in an inscription which they had carved on one of their altars—"To an unknown God." "The one whom you are worshipping in ignorance," he said, "is the one whose character I have come to make clear. I have come to tell you of the God who made the world and everything in it, and

whose children you are." This is the courteous speech of a deeply sympathetic man.

His heart was compassionate toward the men who despised him. He knew from his own experience what conscientious men in their ignorance can do. It is because their eyes are blinded that they remain in their unbelief. He often thought of the veil which was said to have been hung over the faces of Moses, and that veil made him think of the veil which kept his countrymen from seeing that the glory of Moses fades in Christ. "Yes," he said, "down to this day, whenever Moses is read aloud, the veil rests on their heart," but this did not dampen his enthusiasm or dull the edge of his compassion.

It was his abiding sympathy which made him unfailingly courteous. So long as a man is sympathetic, he cannot easily be impolite. It gave him amazing powers of patience. If a man feels deeply with the men who need him, he is never likely to forsake them. Because of his sympathy, his forbearance was unparalleled. Calumny and hatred could not break him down. He was always putting himself in the other man's place. Does he start to argue a theological thesis, he keeps the man who takes the other side always in sight. He expresses that man's ideas for him, puts his questions, states his objections, sets forth his position, always putting himself in the place of those with whom he is arguing. He can ap-

preciate the force of the arguments which are urged against him, and can enter into the mind of the man who has not yet been convinced.

He can sympathize with the critics of public worship. He can see things through the eyes of the outsider. He puts himself in the critics' place, thinks with his mind and speaks with his mouth. In dealing with the disorder in the worship of the Church in Corinth, he says, "If you persist in blessing God in a tongue which no one can understand, how is the outsider to know when to say 'Amen'? If outsiders come in when you are all speaking with tongues, will they not say you are crazy?" He could look at the Church from within, and he could look at it from without. He was always putting himself in the other man's place.

It was his sympathy which made his heart so frequently anxious. It is only sensitive and affectionate natures which know what worry really is. All of his churches were subjected to continuous assault. Men savage as wolves would break in, not sparing the flock, and sometimes even members of the Church, falling into fanaticisms and heresies, would lead believers astray. When Paul was absent from one of his Churches, his heart was in a chronic state of solicitude. He was always hungering for news. He was eager to know how the brethren were getting along. When no news came, his heart was filled with dis-

mal forebodings. When good news came, his cup ran over.

If we seek an explanation of this astonishing and unfailing sympathy, we must look for it in the fulness of his humanity. Human nature was strong in him. He had in him not one man only, but many men. The Jew was in him, but the Greek was in him too, and the Roman also, and so were men of many other lands. It was because there were so many men within him, that he could appreciate and find interest in so many men outside. In his heart were the thoughts and feelings, the affinities and antipathies, the agreements and the contradictions of our common human nature. He carried within him the streams of pride and passion, fear and joy, hate and love which lie deep in all men's souls. Because all the currents of impulse and inclination, aspiration and yearning were mighty in him, he could enter into the souls of others. The life he lived opened up in his heart new fountains of sympathetic feeling. Because he had suffered so much himself, he knew how to enter into the sufferings of others. His suffering fed his sympathy, and his sympathy made him willing to suffer more.

And thus through his sympathy did he become a man of power. Because he sympathized with men he was able to understand them. No man understands another man except through a sympathetic spirit. Men were drawn to him because

they knew he felt with them, and they could not leave him after they once had felt the beating of his tender heart. They felt that here at last was a man who understood them, and who cared for them, no matter who or what they were.

Some of Paul's ideas are of little present worth. Some of his arguments no longer convince. Some of his theology has been left behind, but his sympathy is an imperishable possession. That shines with a glory all undimmed, and will shine like the stars forever. There are treasures which rust and moths do not consume, and which the thief of time cannot break through and steal. Sympathy is gold laid up in heaven. That subtle and much vaunted something known as Paulinism, may some day pass away. "Our little systems have their day, they have their day and cease to be." What the world most needs is not Paulinism, but Paul. It needs the warmth and uplift of his sympathetic soul. One of the critical questions of our day is, how long will the earth's stock of coal supply our needs? Experts earnestly discuss the extent of the coal deposits, and calculate the date at which the stock of coal will be exhausted. A far more momentous question is, "How long will the world's stock of sympathy hold out?" Is sympathy a form of power which can be exhausted? Will men some day cease to feel with one another across the lines of class and nation and race? Will the human heart

like the earth some day grow cold? Sympathy is one of the mighty forces by which society functions, and without it civilization would crumble to ruins.

The world needs it more and more. Men physically are coming ever closer together, and without sympathy these multiplying social contacts must produce increasing irritation and peril. It is a sad world we are living in, and hearts everywhere are craving a response which is denied them. Lives on every side are going to waste, because of the lack of a sympathetic touch. Thousands are wretched because they are not understood, and tens of thousands are lonely because no one seems to care. Mankind is in sore need of the strength which comes from the felt throb of a sympathetic heart.

It is in his sympathy that we find another incontestable proof of Paul's inspiration. We have too long looked for proofs of inspiration solely in the realm of dogmatic assertion. We have made inerrancy in opinion, the one test of an Apostle's commission from heaven. Minor discrepancies and verbal contradictions have been dwelt on as matters of immeasurable importance, and one mistaken opinion has been considered sufficient to overthrow the whole doctrine of Biblical inspiration. But the convincing evidences of inspiration must be sought at last in the realm of character. Paul's inspiration is proved not

by his doctrine of the fall, or by his theory of original sin, or by what he said concerning the immediate return of Christ, but by his sympathy with all kinds of people. What is sympathy but a form of the indwelling spirit of God? Whence comes this beautiful thing into human character if not from heaven? How could it appear on earth if it did not exist in the heart of the Eternal? In Paul's character we have a divine revelation. God communicates himself to mankind through men who are like him. In his sympathy Jesus was like his Father, and Paul was in his sympathy like unto the Son of God. It was the breadth of Jesus' sympathy which aroused the suspicion and then the hatred of his countrymen. "A friend of publicans and sinners" was the sneering title which was given him. Men meant it to be a crown of thorns, and it has brightened into a crown of glory. It was the memory of Christ's sympathy which moved and strengthened the hearts of his disciples after a cloud had received him from their sight. It was the assurance of his continued sympathy which heartened them to strive on and endure. They said to one another in darkened days—"Ours is no High Priest who is incapable of sympathizing with our weakness, but one who has been tried in every respect like ourselves, yet without sinning. So let us approach the throne of grace with confidence."

XIX

HIS THANKFULNESS

XIX

HIS THANKFULNESS

THE only reference to Paul's letters in the New Testament is found in the Second Epistle of St. Peter, where we are told that in those letters are "some things hard to be understood, and which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." But there are some things also which are easily understood, and which no one, however perverse, can wrest to his own undoing. The gratitude of Paul is written large across the pages of his letters. He who runs may read. Some of the ideas of Paul are obscure, but none of the traits of his character is. His reasoning may at times be too high, or his mysticism may be too deep for the average reader, but his character is easily within the reach of all. Some of his doctrines may be incredible, but no one can be caused to stumble by his virtues. There are paragraphs in his letters which only the scholars can deal with, but there are other paragraphs which every one can easily take in. No one is left in doubt as to his thankfulness.

Some of his sentences may be wrested to men's hurt, but none of them which tell of his character. Various and conflicting interpretations have been given of nearly every one of his doctrinal statements, but of his capacity for gratitude, there is only one opinion. Interminable controversies have raged over his theories, but there are no discussions about his habitual practice of giving thanks.

Much that he says is only of local application. It was intended for the world to which it was addressed, but his virtues are of universal significance, and are the precious possession of all mankind. Some of his teaching was of temporary importance. It has long since become archaic and outgrown. But what the man was is eternal. The beauty of his gratitude is timeless, and to the last syllable of recorded time, men will come to him to hear the music of a thankful heart.

The passages in which his gratitude is shown have never been disputed. All the doctrinal paragraphs have given rise to doubts and negations. If a scholar does not accept a theological idea, he is almost sure to attack the authenticity of the paragraph which contains it. He sees that it is an interpolation, or the cunning work of a redactor, or possibly the whole letter is the production of a man who lived long after Paul's day. But no one questions the authenticity of the para-

graphs which set forth Paul's gratitude. Here at any rate we are on solid ground. Paul's ideas are demolished, but the man Paul survives. Men doubt his eschatology, but not his grateful heart. They reject his Christology, but commend his habit of returning thanks. The story of his gratitude cannot be taken from us.

His authority has frequently been denied. When he gives his theory of Adam, or pictures the man of sin, or offers advice in regard to marriage, men ask—"By what authority do you say all this"; but no one questions the authority of his virtues. They speak to us in a tone not to be contradicted. There is something within us that bears witness that these virtues are the creation of heaven. By his patience he says to us, "Be patient," by his courage, he says, "Be courageous," and by his gratitude, he says, "Be grateful," and we feel that it is God himself who is speaking. It is by the virtues of good men that God tells us what kind of men we ought to be.

In Paul's gratitude we see one of the loveliest traits of his character. Gratitude is the exquisite flower of a fine nature. It is so beautiful that one hesitates to call it a virtue, it seems to belong among the graces. There are strong characters which do not have it. The world is full of ungrateful people, and an ungrateful person is never happy. There are multitudes who excuse their ingratitude by saying they have nothing to be

grateful for. Something which they greatly desired has been denied them. That excuses them for life from all obligations to be thankful. Paul was refused a boon which he asked God for again and again, but the refusal did not alter his disposition. He went right on giving thanks. Others are not grateful because the world has dealt with them harshly. Many have treated them with indifference, and some with cruelty, and their heart is left cynical and hard. Paul was "reviled, persecuted, defamed, made as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things," and yet he kept saying, "Thanks be unto God." It is not easy to be grateful when life is stripped bare of all the things which make the human heart contented and happy. Paul described his life thus: "Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, and we toil, working with our own hands." But his heart was always overflowing with thanksgiving. It is one of the miracles of the world, that the people to whom the least has been given, and upon whom the heaviest burdens have been rolled, are often the most appreciative of the richness of life, and most thankful to God for his goodness.

There are those who are not altogether devoid of grateful feeling, but the feeing is so feeble, it seldom if ever expresses itself in words. In the midst of mercies, they remain dumb. They

excuse themselves from saying, "I thank you," by the thought that words are easy and often empty, and that gratitude in the heart is all that either God or man can rightfully expect. But out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaks. When the heart is surcharged with thankfulness, the tongue cannot remain voiceless. The soul when full overflows, and the overflow passes into speech. Only an impoverished and feeble gratitude ever seeks refuge in silence. Paul in all places and at all times gave thanks.

In his capacity for grateful expression, Paul is the brother of the Psalmist who wrote, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." The spirit of thankfulness in Paul's heart was always reporting itself to the eyes and ears of men. It was something which could not be hidden. Luke could not write a history of the early church without making room for at least a few incidents illustrative of Paul's habit of returning thanks. Luke does not deal with the interior life of his friend. It is his purpose simply to sketch his outward career. His volume is a book of "Acts," and it is the journeys of Paul from country to country which he sets himself to record. But there were three public occasions on which Paul's gratitude expressed itself in such a dramatic and unforgetable way, that Luke could not pass them by. He tells us that when Paul and Silas were in the innermost cell in the Philip-

pian jail, their feet made fast in the stocks, at midnight the two prisoners began to sing hymns of praise to God. They had been deprived of their liberty, their backs were bleeding from the Roman flogging, they were in great discomfort, but they did not forget God's goodness, and the feeling of thankfulness was so full that it poured itself out in song. Luke tells us that all the prisoners listened. Through 1900 years, prisoners in many parts of the world have not ceased to listen—men and women shut up in the cells of worldliness, held tight in the stocks of sin, have given wondering attention to those songs in the night. The Pauline theology has often fallen on deaf ears, but the Pauline song of praise in the night, has found entrance into souls who have been indifferent to doctrine. And thus does Paul speak to the heart of mankind both in his tears and in his songs.

Luke tells us of another scene equally dramatic. Paul stands on the deck of a ship wrecked on an unknown coast. It is not daylight yet, and the drenched passengers peer into the darkness with mingled hope and fear. For fourteen days they have been driven by a tempest so that all appetite had been taken away. Now hungry and weak, they shiver in the cold air of the early morning. Paul summons the dispirited, panic-striken company around him, speaks words of cheer, and then calls for food that all may eat.

What he did at that point never faded from Luke's mind. Before Paul broke the bread, he gave thanks to God in the presence of all, and having done this, he broke it and began to eat. Following his example, the other two hundred and seventy-five fatigued and drooping men were revived in spirit, and also ate. In the chill dawn of a cheerless day, with nothing but human wretchedness around him, and a clouded, threatening future before him, Paul's heart is still singing hymns of praise to God. Before he puts a piece of bread to his mouth, he must first speak to God in thanksgiving.

Luke never forgot how deeply moved Paul was at the sight of a little company of Roman Christians, who had come out to meet him. Some had walked thirty miles to a place called the Three Taverns, and a few had gone even ten miles further, to the Market of Appius, to greet the Apostle who had written them such a wonderful letter. When Paul's eyes fell on them, strangers to him and yet so hospitable and kind, his heart leaped, and the feeling of gratitude within him rushed to his lips, and found expression in words which Luke has not recorded, but which made an ineffaceable impression on his mind. "He thanked God." The sight of those Roman Christians walking so many miles to welcome him, refreshed his lonely and troubled spirit, and in Luke's terse phrase, "he took courage."

The cheering looks of those friendly eyes scattered his misgivings. He now knew that hearts were open to him in the capital of the world. "He thanked God."

But it is in his letters that Paul's heart is most fully disclosed. It is here that we see that in him the mood of gratitude was habitual. Paul's whole life was drenched in thankfulness. A strain of praise was flowing through him all the time, and it bubbles up right in the midst of his arguments in glowing exclamations and fervent doxologies. "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory!" "Thanks be unto God who always causeth us to triumph in Christ." "Thanks be unto God who has inspired Titus with an interest in you equal to our own." "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." The letters are so intimate and so spontaneous, so familiar and so colloquial, that whatever feeling is strong in him, spurts up into view. He does not allow his ideas to stand in the way of his feelings. His intellect is not permitted to suppress or shove aside his heart. When he thinks of how God in Christ has forgiven him, he rises at once into a doxology—"Now unto the King Eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever." At the conclusion of his survey of history, with God's purposes and methods unrolled before his eyes, he suddenly stops and breaks out in a song of praise: "O the depth of

the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! Of him and through him and unto him are all things. To him be the glory forever."

Nearly all of his letters open with a burst of thanksgiving. He has always something to be grateful for. If nothing is immediately obvious, he seeks for it. When he wrote his second letter to the Corinthians, he could not express thanks for their spiritual progress, and so he thanks God for the suffering which they have caused him. Along with the suffering has come comfort which he can pass on to others. Because his sufferings have been so great, and the consolation which has come to him has been so wonderful, he will now be better able to comfort people who are in any distress by the comfort with which he himself was comforted by God.

He is always thanking God for his friends. He is grateful for the grace bestowed upon them, for their growth in spiritual knowledge and power, for their faith and love, for their remembrance of him, and for the privilege he enjoys of making mention of them in his prayers. But the chief cause of his gratitude to God, is the revelation of God's mind and heart in Jesus Christ, and for the forgiveness which has come to men through him. All of his gratitude is rolled up in the one exclamation—"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!"

Paul was grateful also to men. He never forgot a favor, never lost sight of a person who had helped him. There were two women in Philippi who had been especially courageous and self-sacrificing in forwarding his work. In Rome he thinks of them, and of all they did, and in his letter to the Philippian Church he mentions them by name, and urges one of his friends to lend them a hand. When he writes the word, "fellow-workers," it carries along with it the fragrance of gratitude. When he sends greetings to various converts in far-away cities, he often adds —"He helped me," "She worked for us," "They risked their necks for my life." His prayers are filled with the names of people whom he carries gratefully to God.

The Church in Philippi was especially dear to him. More than once it had shown in beautiful ways its devotion to him. Of all his letters, none is so cheerful and affectionate as his letter to this Church. It is filled with the aroma of thankfulness. This is the way it begins: "I thank my God for all your remembrance of me: in all my prayers for you all, I always pray with a sense of joy for what you have contributed to the Gospel from the very first day down to this moment. It is only natural for me to be thinking of you all in this way, for alike in my prison, and as I defend and vindicate the Gospel, I bear in mind how you all share with me in the grace

divine. God is my witness that I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus himself." His acceptance of their last gift which has just arrived, is most charming. His gratitude overflows into sentences of rare beauty. He calls their gift a fragrant perfume, the sort of sacrifice which gives pleasure to God. His feeling rises as he meditates on their kindness, and he closes with a doxology—"Glory to God our Father forever and ever: Amen."

There was a man named Onesiphorus who because of his attentions to Paul, has been immortalized in the second letter to Timothy. At the time the letter was written, the man himself was dead, but his wife and children were living, and Paul invokes the divine blessing on them all. He meditates on the various times when Onesiphorus had cheered up his spirit by coming to see him in Rome. He had had a hard time finding Paul, but he did not give up the search until he had discovered where he was. He was not ashamed to come to see him, even though Paul was a prisoner of the Roman Government, and every time he came, he refreshed Paul's heart. Onesiphorus is now in the other world, but Paul's thoughts follow him there, and because he cannot express to him what he feels, he speaks to God about him, and also about his entire family.

Near the beginning of the letter, Paul refers to the people who have cast him off because of

his chains, and this recalls the friendly face of faithful Onesiphorus, who in spite of the chains remained his friend, giving him support in Rome as he had done in Ephesus years before. On the last page of the letter, Paul thinks of Alexander and others who had done their utmost against him. He says that at his first trial, he had to defend himself, for he had no supporters. Every one deserted him. But there were still on the face of the earth hearts which were loyal and true, and to the foremost of these he will send his affectionate greetings. Before he pens his final benediction, he writes this: "Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Salute the man and the woman who took me into their own home, and by whose side I often worked in earning my bread, and who in time of danger risked their own lives for my sake, and remember me also to the wife and children of the man who stood by my side when I fought with beasts in Ephesus, and who when I was a prisoner in Rome, did not turn away from me, but befriended me, and stood by me to the end of his life." It is worthy of note that, in the last paragraph of the last of Paul's letters, we have a rich reminder of a gratitude which never failed.

Paul's exhortations to thanksgiving take on a heightened glory, when they are read in the light of his own character. To the Philippians, he says—"Make your requests known to God in

prayer and supplication with thanksgiving." He writes to the Ephesians—"Render thanks to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ at all times and for all things." To the Colossians, he says—"Whatever you say or do, let everything be done in dependence on the Lord Jesus, giving thanks in his name to God the Father." One of the most suggestive of all his exhortations occurs near the end of his letter to the Colossians: "Maintain your zest for prayer by thanksgiving." The spirit of gratitude is one of the mightiest of all spirits. It helps one to be courageous and also to endure. It makes it easier to work and also to pray.

XX

HIS JOYFULNESS

XX

HIS JOYFULNESS

The letters of Paul are full of distressing facts, but they do not depress the reader. Paul was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. His career was not roughened by an occasional hardship, it was a continuous tragedy. Paul experienced nearly all the sorrows which a mortal can know. Misunderstanding, misrepresentation, indifference, ingratitude, calumny, slander, suspicion, hatred, scorn, loneliness, hunger, toil, poverty, weariness, sickness, vituperations as a renegade, a traitor, an enemy of society, and a blasphemer, imprisonment, scourging, and threats of death; all this and more he was called upon to endure. A brief resumé of his sufferings is found in his second letter to the Corinthians. That was written probably twelve years before his death. The last twelve years of his life were no easier than the twelve years which preceded them. Luke tells us of a shipwreck, and of two imprisonments, each of two years' duration, after the letter to the Corinthians was written, but Luke was not in the habit of dwelling upon his friend's

hardships, and we cannot consider his narrative at all complete. Paul says he was scourged five times in Jewish Synagogues, but Luke does not mention any of them. He says he was flogged three times by the Romans, but Luke mentions only one. He says he was shipwrecked three times, but Luke passes over these three in silence. Probably not the half of Paul's hardships are referred to in the New Testament, but enough of them are recorded to appall the heart.

One cannot read the letters without knowing that Paul's suffering was immense. He makes no effort to cover it over. He speaks of his tribulations with great freedom. He has not the slightest hesitation in speaking about himself, and he brings his sufferings boldly to the front. We find him in his old age calling to mind the persecutions of his earlier ministry, the hard things which befell him at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra, and it evidently comforts him to know that Timothy is familiar with the whole distressful story. Paul is not reticent about his sufferings. They are a conspicuous and essential part of his life.

But the recital of his hardships does not make us gloomy. When we are most depressed, we turn to his letters. They cheer us up in our most doleful moods, we are helped by what he went through. His letters kindle a light in the darkness. We drink strength by drawing near

to his suffering heart. We grow more cheerful by meditating on the tragedy of his life. It is not dismal events in the lives of others which depress us so much as the spirit in which those events are met. If the soul of the sufferer is broken down into lugubrious helplessness or wailing despair, our own heart is dragged down into the pit. But the soul which can suffer victoriously is the soul which floods the heavens with light. In his sufferings, Paul was a superconqueror. He never moans, whines or murmurs. He never grumbles or groans. He never sobs or sighs. He has no tears for his own afflictions, only for the afflictions of others. He wants us to know of his sufferings, but it is not that we may cry over them. He desires to increase our courage and deepen our joy. When he says to the Colossians—"Remember my bonds," he is not saying—"Please weep over my misfortune." He is only saying—"If you remember I have a chain around my wrists, you will excuse my bad writing."

He uses his sufferings as an incentive to heroic endurance. "Look at me," he was always saying, "do not think that your experience is exceptional. Your fate is the common fate of all who desire to live as Jesus lived. See what I have suffered. No man can enter the kingdom of God without suffering. All who want to live the religious life in Christ will be persecuted." Like

Jesus, Paul did not gloss somber facts. He did not blink the thorny side of life. He had worn a crown of thorns himself, and he knew that others must wear it too. He had tasted of a bitter cup, and he knew that it was not for his lips alone. His sufferings do not depress us, because he was not conquered by them. His letters give us strength and cheer because they come out of a triumphant heart. They are so pervaded by the spirit of joy, that our own heart catches it, and we become joyful too. He was Paul the unconquered and the unconquerable. The secret of his joy is always escaping him in such exclamations as these: "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory." "Thanks be unto God who always leads us in triumph!" "I am not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes." Rome was a city that appreciated conquering power. She was a city of triumphal arches. All the conquering heroes made their way to the Capitol. Paul was eager to go to a city like that, because he too was a conqueror and had a message which would make it possible for every man to conquer.

He had met so many foes and vanquished them, that his language at times seems almost boastful. "I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, and necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak then I am strong." "I can do all things in Him that

strengtheneth me." Whenever we are in Paul's presence, we hear the sound of the trumpets. Many men play on flutes. Paul blows a blast which makes us forget the weary marches and the bleeding wounds, and fills us with dreams of victory.

And so while he is sorrowful, he is always rejoicing. In the outer courts of his soul there is often pain and sometimes agony, but in the inner court there is always the sound of music and dancing. Underneath the surface of his letters there runs a strain of deep and solemn gladness. Again and again it is hidden from the eye and ear, but it keeps breaking through. The twenty-third Psalm was written in his heart and his cup was always running over.

He had access to none of the springs of happiness which the crowd is always seeking. Silver and gold had he none, and yet his heart was sunny. He had neither wife nor children, and yet he could be happy without a home. He had no remunerative or honored position, but wherever he went he carried a cheerful spirit. The applause of the multitude was never in his ear, and the golden opinions of those who make public sentiment never came to him, but he went on his lonely way with a heart which sang.

He drank at the deep springs. He knew the joy which wells up in a thankful heart. Gratitude is one of the most sparkling of all the emo-

tions. A thankful man cannot easily be gloomy. One cannot return thanks with a wry face. When the lips say, "I thank you," the eyes instinctively smile. Paul was blithe, because he was habitually thankful. Joy and thanksgiving are never far removed from each other. "Rejoice at all times, never give up prayer, thank God for everything"—so he writes to the Thessalonians, thus putting thanksgiving, prayer and joy together.

He knew the joy of hope. Hope always wears a radiant face. He stood on tiptoe, expectant. He knew that better things lay ahead. He was always watching the horizon. Things present and also things to come belonged to him. There are bitter experiences, to be sure, but we must not be prostrated by them. "Our light affliction, which is only for the moment, is working for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." He admits us into one of the secrets of his life, when he writes to the Romans, "Let your hope be a joy to you."

He knew the joy of memory. He treasured the years which are gone. He was always thinking backward. He loved the history of his people. Their experiences were food for his mind. He had no property except a few books—books containing the story of his nation, and the words of its most illustrous teachers. He could not easily get on without his books. "Bring my books," he wrote to Timothy, "and my old coat."

The coat would warm his body, and the books would warm his mind. A man is never altogether wretched so long as he retains the pleasure of reading. He often went back to the beginning of his own life, and he never grew weary of thinking about the amazing experience which came to him near the City of Damascus. Every time he thought of it, a new gush of joy flooded his heart. He urged others to remember their past. "Remember," he wrote to the Ephesians, "the time when you had no hope and were without God in the world, and now you who were once far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ." It was by his use of the past, that he fed his thankfulness, and by his thankfulness he increased the volume of his joy.

He experienced to the full the joy of friendship. He had many foes, but he also had many friends. His foes hated him intensely, but his friends loved him devotedly. He never writes with more glee than when he is pouring out his love on his friends. "Who is our hope, our joy, our crown of pride?" he writes to the Thessalonians. "Why, you are our glory and joy." To the Philippians his language is no less exuberant: "My brothers for whom I cherish love and longing, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord, O my dear ones!" To Timothy he writes: "I long by night and day to see you again. That would fill me with joy." The hap-

piness of his friends made him happy. He exulted in their good fortune. He gloried in their progress. He rejoiced in all their rejoicings. "I was especially delighted," he writes to the Corinthians, "over the delight of Titus, because you have set his mind at rest. I told him of my pride in you, and I have not been disappointed." What fuller fountain of joy is there in all the world than just the joy of loving? The joy of gratitude, and the joy of anticipation, and the joy of remembering, and the joy of loving! No man has a right to be wretched who possesses all these.

He feasted on the joy of helping others. No matter how vexatious their conduct, they could never quite extinguish his happiness. He extracted fresh happiness out of his redoubled efforts to help them. The Corinthians sorely tried his patience, but this is what he wrote to them: "You are in my heart, and you will be there in death and life alike. I have absolute confidence in you. I am indeed proud of you. You are a perfect comfort to me. I am overflowing with joy for all the trouble I have to bear." A man with such a disposition, can never be cheated out of a happy life. When his converts were faithful and made progress, his delight knew no bounds. "It is life to me now," so he writes to the Thessaloneans, "if you stand firm in the Lord! How can I render thanks enough to God for you, for all the joy you make me feel in the presence of

our God." To the Corinthians he writes—"Do not imagine I want to lord it over you—I am simply a helper of your joy."

He possessed the joy of feeling that he was working with God. God has far-reaching plans, and Paul is helping him to carry them out. When he suffers he still is joyful because his sufferings, like the sufferings of Jesus, are helping to work out the purposes of the Eternal. When he meditates on this, he rises at times into rapture. He becomes so joyful that he cannot tell whether he is in the body or out of it. All that he is sure of is that he has been in Paradise, and has heard secrets which no human lips can repeat. There are experiences so intimate and sacred that to talk about them is a desecration. What pitch of blessedness Paul reached at the top of his highest ascent into the heavens of joy we cannot know. He could not tell, and if he had told, we could not understand. In its deepest agonies and in its loftiest ecstacies, the soul is ever alone.

He knew the joy of victory. He conquered every form of bodily opposition, and every form of mental suffering too. When he gazes into the valley of the shadow, he shouts—"O death where is thy sting—O grave where is thy victory?" It makes no difference to him whether he lives or dies, because he has put death under his feet. He goes on at last through the gates of death, with a shout of triumph—"I have fought the

good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith, and henceforth there is laid up for me the crown!"

It is because of his ripe experience with the emotion of joy, that he dwells on it with such stress in his letters. He says that "the Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy." He declares that the first two fruits of the spirit are love and joy. Where love is, joy must follow. A joyless life in Christ is to him inconceivable. Human life is not complete until it is crowned with joy. A gloomy heart is a heart displeasing to God. God loves a cheerful giver. A grumbling heart takes away the beauty of a beneficient act. If you are going to show mercy, then do it with cheerfulness. Men and women in trouble are not helped by people with sour hearts or long faces. Would you lift a man up, then be joyful.

How to be happy is one of the haunting problems of mankind. Ours is a doleful world, and after centuries of experimentation, it must be confessed that mankind has not yet learned the secret of a joyous life. It is sometimes questioned whether one has a right to be happy in a world so full of misery. For the average mortal, joys are few and fleeting. We have occasional glorious hours, but they are like islands in an ocean on which the sun falls faintly. Joyfulness belongs, we conclude, to the angels. It is an ex-

perience which can be known by the fortunate only in some future world.

But here is a man who knew how to be happy. He lived in a generation far more miserable and corrupt than our own. Poverty and suffering, injustice and cruelty, vice and brutality abounded on every side, but all this did not extinguish his joy. He died daily, but this continuous crucifixion did not silence the hallelujah in his heart. He walked through a world on which a deep gloom had fallen, but on his face there rested a light which the powers of darkness could not quench. Many men grow melancholy with the advancing years. Many a brave worker tired out by his labors crawls under a juniper tree at last. Paul in his old age sees still worse times ahead of the world, but the cheeriest of all his letters was written in prison in Rome. His letter to the Philippians has joy for its keynote. He begins by telling his friends what a sense of joy he feels when he mentions them in his prayers. He is a prisoner in chains, but this after all is not so bad. Even his chains are giving the gospel message a new liberty so that it has penetrated even the palace of the Cæsars. There are men preaching a garbled Gospel in a wrong spirit, but even this is not disheartening, for in this way the name of Christ is becoming better known. It may be that he must soon die, but this is no cause for gloom. "Even if my life blood has to be poured as a liba-

tion on the sacred sacrifice of faith you are offering to God, I rejoice, I congratulate you all, and you in turn must rejoice and congratulate me." After a word of praise for Timothy and Epaphroditus, he urges his readers to rejoice. He says it does not tire him to write the word, and it is a good thing for them to have him write it again and again. He says he does not forget what wicked men are doing and saying, but that they should not fail to remember that they themselves are a colony of heaven, and are waiting for the Savior who is going to transform the body they now have till it resembles the body of his glory. He next refers to some unpleasant differences which have arisen between two of their chief workers, but he will not forget the valiant service they rendered in former years, nor will he doubt that their names are written in the book of life. And thus does he sum up his letter with —"Rejoice in the Lord all the time. Let me say it again, rejoice."

It seems strange that this man so full of nerves, so buffeted and trampled on by the world which he longed to help, could be so happy. He had a deep sense of sin. He could paint its heinousness in colors which do not fade. He knew the power of it, and the guilt of it, and the extent of it, but this did not make him glum. He was a puritan, a zealot for holiness, but he was not grim. He was a reformer. He tried to refash-

ion the world's life and was defeated, but he did not talk in a plaintive or pathetic tone. He was a saint, living for God, but his voice was not lachrymose, nor were his eyes filled with shadows. He was so full of joy that even in jail in a foreign land, when he was too miserable to sleep, he could break into song.

We need this man. The world will always need him. We need his ideas, but we need still more his moods. We need some one to make and keep us glad. We need the tonic of a heart which laughs. We need by our side a man who has in him the bracing joy of victory.

"Be of good cheer," so said the Son of God to a company of disheartened men, and the reason he gave for their being cheerful was—"I have overcome the world." The world had done its utmost to crush him, and had failed. Evil in every form had assaulted him, and in vain. "Be of good cheer," he said, "for I have shown you that even in a world like this, victory can be won. I have overcome the world, and therefore you can overcome it too."

It hardly seemed possible. And lo! out of the ranks of our common humanity, there comes a man with all the marks of our frailties and imperfections stamped visibly upon him, and by the inspiration of the Son of God, that man also conquers. Jesus was a man of joy. His ambition was to have his joy abide in his disciples,

and that their joy might be made full. He assured them that if they once got it, no one could take it away. Like his Master, Paul overcame the world. The world could not make him despondent or bitter or hopeless. He entered into the joy of his Lord.

XXI

HIS TRUSTFULNESS

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By his trustfulness I mean his faith. The word "Faith" has been spoiled by the theologians. They have discussed it so much that nobody knows what it is. They have defined it so often that the mind is hopelessly confused. They have analyzed it so thoroughly, that its meaning has been lost in the process. So many different kinds of faith have been tabulated, that one becomes bewildered in trying to distinguish them. Our fathers were so solemnly urged to secure a "saving" faith, that they were constantly tormented by the fear of possessing some inferior kind. They tried to get their faith under their eye that they might scrutinize it and dissect it and classify it, but it provokingly eluded them.

Faith cannot be defined. One may call it a force or a power, a belief or a principle, a confidence or a reliance, a divine fire or an enthusiasm, a giving substance to things hoped for, a test of things not seen, but nothing is gained by the definition. Neither Jesus nor any of the twelve ever attempted to define it. The only writer in

the New Testament who makes an effort to do it, is the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews, and after two attempts he gives it up, and proceeds to show what faith is by telling what it does. The only way in which we can know what faith is, is to come in contact with it in others, or have it in ourself. We have often been helped by looking at the heroes of faith enrolled in the Letter to the Hebrews. It will help us still more to find how faith worked in the great soul of Paul. Paul was incarnate faith in action.

We are especially eager to study his faith, because Paul is known the world over as the "Apostle of Faith." He is its most illustrious champion. It was a word which he loved, and it was always on his lips and pen; but strange to say, he has nothing to tell us of his own faith. He never refers to it. He asks his readers to remember his industry, his patience, his unselfishness, his longsuffering, his fidelity, his sacrifice, but he never asks them to remember his faith. "We walk by faith," was one of his favorite sayings, and, therefore, to see his faith we must observe the way he walked. He walked as Jesus walked. That was what his faith enabled him to do.

His favorite hero in the Hebrew Scriptures was Abraham. Abraham had opened a new era in the history of the Hebrew people, and indeed of the human race. He was the father of the Hebrew nation, and also of all other men who

wish to live as God intends them to live. The secret of Abraham's life could be told in a single sentence—"He trusted God." He trusted him in spite of appearances. He trusted him in the dark. "He went out not knowing whither he was going." "He wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith." And it is in the steps of that faith of Abraham, that all men ought to walk. So Paul wrote to the Romans.

Abraham believed that God is, and so did Paul. That was Paul's deepest conviction. That belief was woven into the fiber of his mind, into the texture of his heart. "From him and through him and to him are all things." "There is one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." "To us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we unto him." Abraham believed that God is righteous. So did Paul. Paul was sure that the Judge of all the earth will always do right. The Eternal Goodness was a rock on which he built. The apparent contradictions of this in human experience, he swept indignantly away. "Let God be found true, but every man a liar."

God had made a promise to the Hebrew people, and that promise had been fulfilled in Jesus. Jesus was the Messiah. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead. God was in him reconciling the world to himself. Of this Paul was certain. God is the Father of Jesus Christ. God is

like Jesus. Therefore God is our loving helper and friend.

Because Paul is sure of God in Christ, he is certain of victory. Man can be delivered from his sins. He does not fight a losing battle. He can be freed from the sense of guilt. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." He knows this from his own experience.

And victory in prayer is also assured. The old fears are taken out of the heart. Men no longer pray as slaves but as children. They call God "Father," and God's spirit in their own hearts bears witness to the fact that they are indeed his children, and if children they are heirs, and if heirs, they are joint heirs with Christ, and whatever Christ inherits, they will share with him. They do not know how to pray as they ought, but God's spirit gives them the necessary assistance. Paul knows this also from his own experience.

Because God is in Christ, it is worth while to work for him. A workman is sure to receive whatever help is needed. To Festus and Agrippa, Paul says, "Having obtained the help that is from God, I stand unto this day testifying both to small and great." God is the helper of every one who is engaged in God's work. "I did the planting, Apollos did the watering, but it was God who made the seed grow." God does most of the

work. "Neither planter nor waterer counts, but God alone who makes the seed grow." No one works in vain. "Each one will get his own wage for the special work that he has done." "The victory is ours, thank God! Hold your ground, immovable, abound in work for the Lord at all times, for you may be sure that in the Lord your labor is never thrown away."

Because Paul was working for God, he was sure he was guided day by day. Luke tells us how Paul happened to preach the Gospel in Europe. It came about through a series of disappointments and rearrangings of plans. Paul and Barnabas were to go together on a second great missionary tour, but the dispute about John Mark upset everything, and sent Paul off with a new helper in a different direction. He decided that he would now preach in the province of Asia, but when he was ready to open his work there, "he was forbidden," says Luke, "of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia." In what way the Holy Spirit forbade him, we do not know. It has been surmised that malaria was just then prevalent in that province, and that Paul, profiting by a former experience, made up his mind to keep away. This is not at all unlikely. The Holy Spirit might speak through an epidemic, as later on we are told that Paul changed his plan because of a plot to take his life. Our New Testament says, "A plot was laid against him by the

Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, and he determined to return through Macedonia." In an ancient and honored New Testament manuscript, the sentence reads thus: "He purposed to set sail for Syria, but the Spirit told him to return through Macedonia." The Holy Spirit spoke to him through outward conditions and situations, and through inward impulses and inclinations. Asia for some reason or other was just then inaccessible, and so St. Paul turned his face toward Bithynia. When he came opposite Mysia, and was about to enter Bithynia, the Spirit of Jesus "suffered him not." In what way the Spirit of Jesus made his will known, we are not told, but probably on approaching the province, and learning that there were no large cities in it, Paul felt that his work did not lie in that direction, and so decided to go on. He had not set out with the expectation of going to Troas, but it was in Troas that he and his fellow travelers finally arrived. Two doors had been shut, but Paul was not disconcerted. He trusted God. He knew the way must be open for the work God wanted him to do. Like Abraham, he was called, and he went out not knowing whither he was going. He walked by faith and not by sight. He had as yet no thought of going into Europe, but one night in Troas a strange thing happened. He had a dream, and in the dream he saw a man of Macedonia standing before him, and this man

kept saying to him, "Come over—come over and help us!" In the morning, Paul told his dream to Silas and Timothy and Luke, and they all decided that in this dream God had spoken. They were soon on their way to Neapolis. And thus was the religion of Jesus carried from one continent to another. The way was dark and perplexing, but Paul went on and on. It takes a deal of courage to walk by faith. Men become disheartened when their plans break down and the doors are shut, but Paul was confident of God's guidance, and whenever a call came, he was ready to obey. His obedience was the expression of his faith.

It was by faith that Paul met and overcame suffering. Suffering cannot be the last word in the plan of a loving God. Suffering must be a preparation, a discipline, an introduction. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Our light affliction which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." "We are killed all the day long, we were accounted as sheep for the slaughter; in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." This is faith.

It was by faith that Paul faced the threats and scorn of the Graeco-Roman world. Like Moses, he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. Noth-

ing has been discovered within the last hundred years to throw light on Paul's personal life. The libraries and monasteries, the tombs and the caves and the sand heaps have been ransacked by men eager for additional information, but not a scrap has been found to increase our knowledge of the actions or words or exploits of the Apostle.. No letter to him or by him has been found, no description of him by any Greek or Roman writer has yet come to light. Nothing has been discovered to satisfy our curiosity in regard to his contemplated journey to Spain. But while nothing has been found to tell us more about Paul's life, much has been learned about the world in which Paul lived. We know the Roman Empire far better than did the men of the early 19th century. We possess a larger knowledge of the social and political conditions of the countries through which Paul traveled. We know better the religions of the first century, and the grip they had on the imaginations and hearts of men. This new light on Paul's world throws new light on Paul himself. By knowing better the forces he contended with, we can estimate more justly the tremendous power of the man. It is when we place ourselves in the world in which he preached, that we begin to realize the magnificent dimensions of his faith. He always struck at once for the heart of great cities. He wanted to challenge the world at its strongest and best. He loved

Ephesus because it was large and rich and mighty. The great temple of Diana made Ephesus all the more attractive to him. The worship of Diana was one of the great faiths which Jesus was to overthrow. Her temple was famous throughout the world—one of its seven wonders. The ceremonial of her worship was magnificent and profoundly impressive. Her influence was felt in the entire life of the people. For centuries her power had held the whole city and province in a grip which was unbreakable. Into the shadow of the magnificent temple of this renowned and mighty goddess, there comes one day a traveling Jew with a new conception of God, and he dares to believe that his new conception will some day empty that temple of its devotees and take the glory from its worship and topple Diana from her seat. Paul had no church edifice, no temple, no shrine, no altar, no hierarchy of officiating priests—nothing that men counted indispensable to religious worship. His paltry sacrament of a few bits of bread and a cup of wine was a worthless and contemptible piece of mummery in the eyes of the people who were accustomed to the elaborate and gorgeous ritual of the great temple; but Paul dared to believe that that ceremony of the bread and the wine, so simple and unostentatious, would some day eclipse the full-orbed splendor of the temple worship, and that by the bread and wine there could be symbolized to the mind

and heart, God's greatest gift to men. Paul had no backing of philosophers or scholars, no support of the rich or noble, no prestige of tradition, and no sanction of antiquity, and yet he had faith that his incredible story of a crucified malefactor coming out of his grave to sit on the throne of heaven, would some day convince the human reason and win the devotion of the human heart.

What he did in Ephesus he did also in Athens. The city was dominated by beliefs that had come down through a thousand years. The beliefs were enshrined in tradition and poetry, in custom and the thought of the common people, but so great was Paul's confidence in God's revelation of himself in Christ, that he presented his new religion to the exponents of the leading philosophical schools in the intellectual center of the world, daring to announce to them that God is going to judge every nation by a man who had been crucified in Judea! He did not invite discussion, but simply set forth his belief. He believed and therefore he spoke.

He followed the same course in Rome. He was no longer now a free man, but his chains did not weaken his faith. The truth cannot be bound. Rome was the Mistress of the World, but he was not afraid or ashamed to say in the City of Cæsar, that Rome had a supreme Master whose name was Jesus. It was faith like that which released

forces which finally flung the cross of Jesus above the Roman Eagles.

Whenever Paul speaks of God, there is a note of certainty which is thrilling. He has no doubts, no misgivings, no hesitations. On many matters, he expresses himself with caution. He moves like a man who is feeling his way and who at times distrusts his own judgment. But when he speaks about God, his confidence is complete. He trusts him implicitly. Doubt of God's love never enters his heart. Uncertainty in regard to God's sovereignty and guidance never shadows his mind. His faith is unclouded. Because of his faith, he is a man of power. "I believe God!" so he said to the distracted and disheartened company on the deck of the wrecked ship, and inspired by the words, every heart present throbbed with a new life. Faith is a form of energy which passes from soul to soul. In the presence of those who trust, we become trustful too.

How was it with him at the end? Faith is strong under bright skies and along smooth roads, but weakens, oftentimes, when the road becomes rough and the clouds are full of thunder. The robust faith of youth sometimes totters when the sun is low in the west. It is not easy to keep one's faith unshaken to the end. Paul lived in a darkening world. On the throne of the Roman Empire sat the worst man who had ever wielded the Roman scepter. Religion seemed to have

lost its power. The masses of men lived without God and without hope in the world. In the great cities society was rotten, and in the rural places, life was coarse and low. The experience of Paul had been such as to make him acquainted with the worst side of human nature. Men had given him ingratitude for kindness and cruelty for mercy. The cause to which he had devoted his life had made a tardy and halting progress. The religion of Jesus was ignored by the classes, and despised by the masses. Now at the end of the day Paul is in prison. He has time to sweep his eyes over the past and to ponder the ups and downs of the difficult road along which his feet have traveled. Sitting in chains he looks death in the face. Again and again his thoughts turn toward Timothy. One day he decides to write him a letter. Timothy is his son. To him he can pour out his heart as to no one else. This is what he says: "I am suffering all this because I am a preacher and Apostle and teacher: yet I am not ashamed; for I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day." He is still certain as to his reward. He repeats some lines which may have been his own, or possibly they may have formed a stanza of a hymn sung by the scattered Christian congregations: "If we died with him, we shall also live with him, if we endure we shall also reign with

him: if we shall deny him he also will deny us: if we are faithless he abideth faithful: for he cannot deny himself."

Years before, he had written to the Church in Corinth: "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." That same note of triumph is still ringing in his heart. "I am already being offered and the time of my departure is come. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing." Near the bottom of the last page of the letter, he records this final expression of his trust: "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory forever and ever, Amen."

And so at the end of his life, Paul had the same quiet, unshakable confidence in God which Jesus had manifested from the day of his baptism to the day of his death. A New Testament writer calls Jesus "the Author and Perfecter of faith." It was he who perfected the faith of Paul. "It is not I"—Paul would have said—"but Christ in me who is capable of this unwavering and joyous confidence in God." We do not know Paul's dying words. But if just before his head was severed from his body he spoke at all, we are sure

his words had in them the spirit of the prayer of Stephen—"Lord lay not this sin to their charge," the triumphant trustfulness of the last words of Jesus—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

XXII

HIS HOPEFULNESS

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The ancients distrusted hope. They had no faith in it because it had so often disappointed them. Hope was never included in their list of virtues. They derived little inspiration from thinking of the future. The past had been so treacherous they dared not trust the future. We too have had our confidence in hope shaken by disillusioning experiences. We have hoped and have been disappointed. We have seen hope grow weak and die. There are so many spurious and degenerate forms of hope that one is in danger of sinking down into the gloomy skepticism which overwhelmed the pre-Christian world.

Paul has sometimes been called a Pessimist, and the charge is based on his description of humanity in his Letter to the Romans, and on his picture of the last days in his Second Letter to Timothy. He painted both pictures black. But is a man a pessimist who faces and recognizes somber facts? If the condition of the pre-Christian world was as Paul painted it, he is not open to the charge of pessimism. If the enemies of

Christianity have turned out to be such as Paul described to Timothy, why should we condemn him? We gain nothing by ignoring facts which are unpleasant. Some people are optimists because they are ignorant. They smile because they do not know. Others are optimists because they are cowards—they dare not face the situation as it is. By shutting their eyes they keep the sunbeams in their heart. Others are optimists because of their superficial philosophy of life. They believe that sin is only immaturity, and that progress is automatic, and that no matter what men may do or fail to do, everything is certain to come out all right. Much of the so-called optimism of the world is foolishness.

Paul was an honest man and faced dismal facts with courage. He knew the deplorable condition of the world, but he never lost hope for humanity. The Gentile insensibility to spiritual values did not overwhelm him. He believed the Gentiles would some day accept the Gospel. They were certain to do this because of the long-suffering patience and boundless mercy of God. As for the Jews, he never gave them up. They had rejected their Messiah, and for the present were obdurate in their unbelief, but this attitude would not continue always. They would ultimately come in. Paul's hope is all the more wonderful because of the surrounding darkness. There was little in the world-condition in the first century to encour-

age bright expectations. The Gentiles were indifferent to the message of Jesus, and the Jews were fierce in their rejection of it, but Paul never surrendered his hope. "It is only a partial insensibility," he said, "that has come over Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles come in. This done, all Israel will be saved. God never goes back on his gifts and call." The letter to the Romans is not the screed of a pessimist, it is a document of hope. The whole letter is conceived in the atmosphere of anticipation. It is in this letter that Paul gives God a new name—the "God of Hope." The letter closes with a prayer that the Romans may abound in hope. Not a simple gloomy fact is ignored, but Paul's hope is so strong that it soars over the vast stretches of human degradation and alights on the shining summits of a world redeemed in Christ.

The Second Letter to Timothy is not devoid of somber colors, but it is shot through and through with the glory of hope. The depressing facts are all marshaled, but they do not lead to despair. There are deserters like Phygellus and Hermogenes, but there are also loyal souls like Onesiphorus. There are heretics like Hymenæus and Philetus. They overthrow the faith of some, but not of all. Their efforts will in the end come to nothing, for "the firm foundation of God standeth." Grievous times lie ahead, and bad

men will oppose the truth, but they will oppose it in vain. Their fate will be the fate of Jannes and Jambres, the rebels who resisted the authority of Moses. Many will have itching ears and will run after teachers who will give them novel and worthless ideas, but the teachers of the truth must persevere in their work, knowing that a crown awaits them at the end. Demas has forsaken him but Luke is still true. Alexander the coppersmith has done him much evil, but for all of the evil he will answer to God. Final justice is certain. At the first trial no one has taken his part—no one but God, and because God was with him, a great blessing had come out of the trial in that many who had never before heard of Jesus, were permitted to hear of him and his salvation. The whole letter is lit up with the radiance of a hopeful heart. Nowhere is there a trace of despair. The letter ends with this jubilant note: "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory forever and ever."

In his hope as in his faith, Paul drank inspiration from the example of Abraham. Abraham was wonderful in hope. "In hope he believed against hope." There was nothing in outward conditions to encourage him in hoping. But nevertheless Abraham kept on hoping. His hope was fed by his faith. It was because he believed that he was able to hope. Like Abraham, Paul made

his home in the realm of expectancy. "In hope were we saved"—so he wrote to the Romans. "We cannot at the beginning see what we are going to be. Hope that is seen is not hope. Who hopes for that which he sees?" The thing which we hope for always lies out of sight. Our hope of getting it supplies the strength to pursue it. "If we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Hope is the mother of patience, and of many other virtues.

Paul made large use of the future. He was always seeing himself as he was some day going to be. He forgot the things behind him in his eagerness to get hold of the things in front of him. He could not brood over the troubles of the past, because of his joyful anticipation of grasping the prize which had been promised. It was the spirit of hope which gave fleetness to his feet and buoyancy to his heart. We have only the first-fruits of the spirit, and we groan within ourselves because we are waiting for something which has been promised, but which has not yet arrived.

Because of his hope, death had no terror. All things work together for good to those who love God, and therefore death will only assist a good man along his way. The fact that God has given us so much justifies us in expecting still more. "The God who did not spare his own son, but gave himself up for us all, surely he will give

us everything besides." "I am certain neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities, neither the present nor the future, no powers of the height or the depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to part us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord." This was his hope.

He had a glowing hope for the Church. His hope for the Church, like his hope for himself, was founded on Christ. Christ had bought the Church with his own blood, and therefore its future was glorious. As yet it was feeble and unworthy. The little congregations flickered like tallow dips in a wind which blew with the fury of a tempest. Insignificant companies of obscure and blundering men and women, what could they ever become or accomplish? Although called to holiness, they were weakened by worldliness and stained by sin, and brought repeatedly under the dominion of the world and the flesh and the devil. But Paul never lost hope. Over the top of the actual, sordid and disappointing Church, he sees the heavenly splendor of the ideal Church without spot or wrinkle or any such flaw. That is the Church he dared to hope for, because God had decreed that his Church should be holy and without blemish.

Because Paul could hope for the Church of Christ, he could hope for the entire human race. Humanity is sunken in sin, but if one man can be delivered from sin, there is hope for all mankind.

One man has been delivered, and therefore the future is certain. But the evidences of the world's redemption are not visible. The Roman empire shows no disposition to accept the ideals of Jesus. A man here and there surrenders his heart to Jesus, but the masses of men pass on unheeding. But this does not dim Paul's hope. God is on the throne, and God's purpose will be realized. The Son of God had said—"If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me," and therefore the time will come when "at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." This was his hope. It was a subtle flame burning at the center of his heart, and the blustering winds could not blow it out.

Paul had high hopes for the universe. It has many a dark and inexplicable feature, but it is moving toward a divine goal. It is sighing and throbbing with pain, but the pain is not aimless. The universe is waiting for something—the advent of a higher type of man. The universe is subject to the divine will, and therefore it will one day be freed from its thralldom to decay and gain the glorious freedom of the children of God. This was his hope.

Paul abounded in hope. He saw that hope is one of the mightiest of all the forces working in

human life. It is hope which keeps the farmer toiling in the field. No man will plow unless he expects to reap. No man will thresh unless he can count on carrying home some of the garnered grain. No general will go willingly to battle unless there is a hope of victory. It is hope which enables a man to hold up his head. Unless a soldier's head is up, he cannot fight. For this reason Paul in sketching the armor of a soldier of Christ, symbolizes hope by the helmet. It is the virtue which enables a man to stand erect and to fight with determination. A soldier in despair is already a defeated man. Paul was mighty as a warrior, because he always had his helmet on.

Paul has much to teach us of a hope which does not make ashamed. Many of our hopes come to nothing. We expect things which do not come, and which cannot come, the universe being what it is. There are hopes which are false and which lead the world into darkness. When great expectations come to nothing, earth's base seems to be built on stubble. Paul's hope was built upon God. His hope was nourished by his religion. No hope can endure which does not rest on religious faith. When we build our hope for civilization on progress or on science or on education or on commercial prosperity or on numbers or on armament or on democracy, we are building on sand. There is only one sure ground of hope, and that is God. Unless there sits upon

the throne of the universe a God who is like Jesus, what right have we to expect anything glorious for the human race in the illimitable future? Unless man is made in the image of God, and unless he is under the guidance of God's spirit, and unless all things on earth are held in the hands of a God who loves us and cares for us, what justification have we for hoping that the fate of the Empires and Republics of our day will be different from the fate of Babylon, Thebes and Rome? It is not enough to wish. Wishing is not hoping. When we hope we not only wish, but we expect. Expecting is not enough. We must expect only the things which a God who is like Jesus can bestow. We must not expect spiritual growth when we persist in acting the fool. We must not expect peace when we go on squandering national wealth in preparing for war, we must not expect happiness so long as we are greedy and selfish, and we must not expect civilization to endure if we go on building our houses on the slopes of the volcanoes of suspicion and ill-will. There is no hope that will not make us ashamed except the hope which is founded on a God who is like Christ.

Paul declares that this attitude of expectancy is an attitude of the soul forever. In the next world, as in this one, we shall go on hoping. Hoping is one of the pleasures of heaven. It gives joy here, and it will give joy there. There

will always be something ahead of us to look forward to, always something better than anything we have yet experienced, always something higher than any height to which we have yet attained, always something more glorious than anything we have yet known. There will be another and a higher heaven beyond the heaven we are in. Forever and forever we shall hope, just as forever and forever we shall trust and love. Paul today is still hoping.

When Paul uses faith, hope and love as a subject, he uses the singular verb. In this way he shows that in his conception these three powers of the soul constitute a unity. It is impossible to hold them separate one from the other. We cannot trust without hope, and we cannot hope without trust. We cannot love without hope, and we cannot hope without love. If we trust we hope, and if we hope we love. If we love we hope and if we hope we trust. Our life is not complete unless we trust and hope and love. It is difficult to separate Paul's trustfulness from his hopefulness, and still more difficult to separate his hopefulness from his love. He says that love is great in trusting, and it is great also in hoping. Love believes all things, and love hopes all things. Paul is great in faith and hope and love. He is wonderful in faith, but he is equally wonderful in hope. He had his hours of despondency, but his hope did not die. He always looked forward. He

was sure that after every night must come the morning, and that the summer must follow every winter. After the suffering must come the joy, and after the conflict must come the peace. He was saved by hope.

He has hope for himself and for everybody else, and all his hope is rooted in God. He has hope for the whole creation, because all creation coheres in Christ. All things belong to a man if the man belongs to Christ, "whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are his if he is Christ's, because Christ belongs to God." After the present dispensation has run its course, "Christ will deliver up his Kingdom to God his Father. He will not do this till he has abolished all rule and all authority and power. He must reign till he has put all his enemies under his feet. When all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him who did subject all things unto him that God may be all in all." In this glorious hope, Paul labored and suffered and conquered.

XXIII

HIS LOVE

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HIS LOVE

PAUL is generally known as a thinker. We ought to think of him more frequently as a lover. His thinking was rooted and grounded in his love. It was in the garden of love that all his virtues and graces came into bloom. John the Son of Zebedee has long enjoyed the distinction of being called the Apostle of love. The title rightfully belongs to the Man of Tarsus. In his capacity for loving, Paul was not a whit behind the disciples whom Jesus loved. In his faculty for describing the nature and power of love, no one has ever equaled him. It is a mistaken notion that Paul's fundamental doctrine is the doctrine of justification by faith. His cardinal doctrine is the doctrine of salvation by love. His doctrine of justification by faith is expounded in detail in only one of his letters—the Letter to the Romans—and then only in opposition to the devotees of the Jewish law, whereas he is everywhere and always dwelling on the wonder-working power of love. Whenever he touches this subject, a divine afflatus comes upon him, and his

sentences take on the loveliness of gems. He is never so fervent, so eloquent, and so convincing as when love is his theme. He invariably puts love above faith. The first fruit of the spirit is love. Love is deeper than faith and mightier, for love works through faith. Love is of higher worth than faith. One may possess faith in its highest stage of development, but if one lacks love, his faith profits him nothing. Faith, hope and love are all great, but the greatest of the three is love.

Paul's sayings about love have become proverbs throughout the Christian world. "Knowledge puffs up, love builds up." "Love is the fulfilment of the law." "Love works no ill to his neighbor." "Owe no man anything save to love one another." "Through love be servants one to another." "Put on the breastplate of faith and love." "Speak the truth in love." "Let all that ye do be done in love." "Above all these things, put on love which is the bond of perfectness." "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." "Love never fails."

Paul's favorite idea is love and it finds immortal expression in the thirteenth chapter of his First Letter to the Corinthians. This is Paul's masterpiece. It is one of the few Pauline passages which stand on a level with the words of Jesus. It is one of the brightest jewels of the

Christian religion. It is a world classic, and will outlive all the classics of Greece and Rome. Its language is so rhythmic, that it has become the fashion to call it a song or a hymn. It is not a poem, but it has in it the subtle music of a poet's heart. It is the noblest description of love ever penned, and will be treasured as long as mankind prizes things that are beautiful.

When therefore, we want to know what Paulinism is, we must turn to the thirteenth Chapter of First Corinthians. It is here that Paul's mind and heart find their highest expression. What has been known as Paulinism—original sin, vicarious atonement, and imputed righteousness—is not the Paulinism which will hold the future. The genuine Paulinism is the doctrine of love. We fail to see Paul as he ought to be seen, unless we see him as a lover. His home is not in the realm of scholasticism, but in the domain of feeling. He does not belong to the kingdom of subtle distinctions and elaborate definitions and inexorable dogmas. He is not related to the sublapsarians or to the supralapsarians, but to the elect company of those who have been baptized into the sweet mystery of love. He is a lover, and like all lovers is of imagination all compact. He is full of poetry and suggestion and imagery. He likes to allegorize the Scriptures into poetry. He loves religious stories like the one of the rolling rock which followed the Israelites through

the wilderness. He seizes on that fictitious rock as a symbol of Christ. His letters are all love letters. If they are read as theological treatises, they become mysteries and stumbling blocks. When we read them, we must not be too sober or too prosaic. He hated the hard literalism of pedants. Paul has been linked in the popular mind with predestination, foreordination, justification by faith, effectual calling and imputed righteousness, when he ought to be linked with the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self-control. His name has been suggestive of long and metaphysical creeds, but it is difficult for any one who really knows him, to think of him taking interest in any of the great creeds of the Church, especially those of the 16th and 17th centuries. We cannot conceive of him reading the ponderous volumes in which his doctrines are expounded. It is not a scheme of doctrine, but a disposition which he wished to fasten on the world, not a dogma but a loving spirit which he wished to impart. The thing which made him happy, was not the assent of the intellect to a particular proposition, but the growth of the soul in its apprehension of the dimensions of love. "We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brothers, for that your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward one another abounds."

The atmosphere of legalism in which his theology has been expounded, is the very atmosphere he hated and did his utmost to banish. The God of the Pauline theologians is all bound up by inexorable conditions and works out his will with difficulty, because immeshed in the laws of his own making, and that is the kind of God which Paul had known in Judaism, and which he had left forever behind. The Paul of traditional theology has incited men to argument and controversy. The Paul of the New Testament when clearly seen inspires men to love. When we see him as he is, he will shine in our eyes as, next to Jesus, the world's supreme lover. All that he wrote must be read in the light of his love.

His nature was warmly affectionate. He was always hungering for love. He could never get enough of it. He always wanted more. The love of God was not sufficient. He craved the love of human beings, just as Jesus did when he took three men with him into the garden of Gethsemane on the last night. We are human and God's love must be mediated to us through our fellows. Paul could not have done his work without the love of his friends. They were indispensable supports of his soul. Without them he was undone. He could not bear to be alone. He never forgot his desolateness when once in the City of Athens, he was entirely alone. When friends were temporarily estranged from him, his

heart was torn to pieces. When a friend forsook him, the world became dark. "Demas has forsaken me!" When we read the words, we can hear his heart groan. He yearned constantly for human approbation, human appreciation, human sympathy and affection. He was sensitive to slights, wounded by ingratitude, killed by suspicion and dislike. He tells the Corinthians how delighted he was when Titus brought him word of their longing, their mourning, their zeal for him. That was a sort of food on which he lived. He confesses that he has written a letter to them "not on account of the offender nor for the sake of the injured party, but in order to let them realize before God how seriously they cared for him." "That is what comforts me," he said.

When he is absent from his friends, he thinks of them, prays for them every day, mentions them by name in his prayers, meditates upon their spiritual progress, rejoices in their moral victories, looks forward with eagerness to hearing from them again. "I hope to send Timothy to you before long, that I may be heartened by news of you." He could not live without news of his friends. When the news was delayed, he became uneasy. If it was withheld too long, he was completely upset. He loved to think of the last time he saw his friends. He remembered how Timothy wept at the last parting. He longed to meet his friends again. "Brothers, when we were

bereft of you for a little while (out of sight, but not out of mind) we were the more eager to see you. We had a keen longing for you. Night and day I pray specially that I may see your faces and supply what is defective in your faith."

He was always thanking God for his friends, praising them, pouring out his love on them. With what affectionate pride he writes, "My fellow-workers," "My fellow soldiers," "My fellow prisoners." There is a wealth of love in the little pronoun "My." He says to the Corinthians—"I wrote to you in sore distress and misery of heart with many a tear, not to pain you but to convince you of my love, my special love for you." To the Philippians he says—"God is my witness that I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus himself." How he lavishes his love on Timothy and Titus, on Tychicus and Epaphroditus, on Philemon and Luke, on Prisca and Aquila, and on a host of others. He cannot live without them. In his last letter we hear him calling for Timothy. "Do your best to come soon to me. Demas has gone. Crescens has gone. Titus has gone. Luke is the only one who is with me. I need you. I need Mark also. Bring Mark along. Erastus stayed in Corinth. I left Trophimus at Miletus ill. Do your best to come before winter." This is the importunate appeal of an affectionate heart, so

loving that it cannot live alone. Through all of Paul's letters, there is a rush of love which swirls round the bases of his argument, and submerges his ideas, and floods the whole territory through which he is making his way.

But his love does not halt at the outer frontiers of personal friendship. He loves all Christian believers. He loves the Churches. They are his children. He loves every person in them. He carries them all in his heart. A church is a company of lovers. In Christian fellowship he finds his highest satisfactions and rewards. To the Church in Corinth he writes: "My heart is wide open for you." To the Church in Philippi he writes: "I cherish love and longing for you. You are my joy and crown." To the Church in Thessalonica he writes: "Who is our hope, our joy, our crown of pride? Why you, you are our glory and joy." The Church is rooted and grounded in love, and it is in love that it builds itself up. It is when Christians are in communion with one another, that they grasp the meaning of the Breadth, the Length, the Depth, and the Height, by knowing the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge." "Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it," and so also did Paul.

His love was wider than the Christian fellowship. He loved all mankind. He loved his countrymen, and he loved foreigners also. He was

fond of the people of every nation. He felt he was indebted to them every one. His deep desire was to share with them the good things which had come to him. Even people he had never seen tugged at his heart. He had never been in Rome, but he longed to impart to the Romans a spiritual gift. He had never seen the people of Spain, but he had an ineradicable desire to help them. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, and Paul so loved the world that his supreme ambition was to lay the whole of it at the feet of Christ.[1]

Paul was not always a lover. Once he was a hater. He hated with all the intensity of his fervent soul. And then one day he met Jesus, and his hate was transformed to love. He had hated Jesus, but Jesus did not retaliate. Jesus pitied Paul and yearned to help him. There was a tenderness in Jesus' voice which broke Paul's heart. There was an affection in Jesus' eyes which dimmed the light of the sun. It was a glory which Paul had never dreamed. From that hour on, Paul was a lover. He loved Jesus with a love which knew no bounds. He loved him with a passion which has probably never been equaled. He loved him so completely that his own self was annihilated, swallowed up in the life of Jesus.

It is his love for Jesus which accounts for all his virtues, and explains his entire career. It

made him patient. Jesus had been patient with him—why should not Paul be patient with others? It gave him courage. Jesus had been courageous in meeting all his foes, why should not Paul be heroic too? It gave him hope. If he could be changed from a man of hate to a man of love, why should he not have hope for every man? It made him willing to sacrifice everything for Jesus. "He loved me and gave himself for me," this is what he kept saying to himself in the midst of all his tribulations and distresses.

It was his love of Jesus which constituted the driving power of his life. It compelled him to preach. "Woe is me if I do not preach!" It forced him to the heart of great cities. They were the centers of the world's life, the homes of the hierarchy of evil, and they must all be conquered for Christ. It drove him to undertake his long and perilous missionary journeys. "The love of Christ constrains me," so he said as he went forward along his steep and difficult way.

It was love which gave him freedom. It lifted him above all bondage to rules, and broke the chains of hampering traditions. It enabled him to taste of the glorious liberty of a child in his father's house. It gave him a sense of power and a certainty of victory. "I can do all things in Christ." That was not vainglorious boasting, but the calm statement of an experienced fact.

It gave him an insight into the dominant prin-

ciple of the universe, and made it possible for him to write his hymn of love. What makes the hymn of love immeasurably precious, is that it is a transcript of Paul's personal experience. It is a portrait of Paul painted by himself. "Love suffers long and is kind." He knew that because of his love for the Corinthians. After all the pain they had caused him, he loved them more than ever. "Love envies not." He was sure of that, because his own heart was innocent of envy. He did not envy the rich or the learned or the mighty. He only wished they possessed his peace and joy. "Love vaunts not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly." He knew this to be so, because in every city in which he had labored, he could say as he said to the Elders of Ephesus—"You yourselves know after what manner I was with you all the time, serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind." "Seeks not her own, is not provoked, takes not account of evil, rejoices not in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth." He was sure of this because his own love had followed such a program. When he wrote, "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things," he was dipping his pen again into the ink of his own life. He could write "Love never fails," because his own love had never proved inadequate to its task. Here is a fountain at which humanity will in each succeeding generation pause and drink.

Some of Paul's ideas are archaic. Much of his system of thought is obsolete or obsolescent. But in his love he is modern. The lover is always up to date. Love never fails to appeal. The world is altogether different from the world which Paul knew, but our modern world is in sore need of a man who loves. A lover is at home in every land and in every age. Our system of thought is not that of the ancients, but the new conceptions of science have not crowded love out. There is room among the cosmic forces for love. We pride ourselves on our knowledge of law, but none of the laws of creation conflict with the law of love. It is the law which underlies and overtops all the others. There is nothing which the world so much needs as love. The whole creation groans and throbs in pain waiting for the advent of men who know how to love. It is because of our lack of love that the wheels of the chariot of civilization drag heavily in the sand. It is at the feet of Paul the lover that humanity must sit, if the world is to enter into life.

" Is a life of love practicable amid modern conditions? Paul answers yes. He lived a life of love in the age of Nero. He lived a life of self-forgetful service in Corinth and Athens and Rome. He had no supernatural origin or endowment, no miraculous knowledge or reservoir of power. He had our limitations and infirmities, wrestled with innumerable problems and trials,

but loved everybody and found that love never failed. He says—"Follow me as I follow Christ." He is not an infallible dictator or a wonder-worker or a demigod, but a frail and suffering mortal winning his way by courage and patience, loving men in their unloveliness, sacrificing for them however suspicious and ungrateful, suffering long and yet never grumpy or sullen or bitter, always kind. Like the love of Christ, his love never failed.

XXIV

HIS RELIGIOUSNESS

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We arrive now at the center of Paul's character—his religiousness. The deepest thing in him, and the all-controlling thing was his religion. With some men, religion is a thing apart, with Paul it was his whole existence. Some men are religious only on the great festival days of the Church. Others are religious only in the emergencies of life—the hours of physical danger, or serious illness, or approaching death. Paul lived in the atmosphere of religion every hour of the day. He was not greatly concerned with philosophy or literature or art, with business or politics or diplomacy—his supreme concern was religion. No portrait of him is complete which ignores his life in God. Without religion he remains an insoluble enigma. His religion was the mainspring of his conduct, the source of his power. He was so deeply and so passionately and so powerfully religious, that we may call him a religious genius.

By religion we mean one's conscious attitude to God. Paul was intensely conscious of his re-

lation to the Eternal. In God he lived and moved and had his being, not unconsciously as with most of us, but consciously. He was sure of God, sure of his existence, sure of his personality, sure of his goodness, sure of his active participation in human affairs in general, and in Paul's affairs in particular. God had set him apart from his very birth for a special work. God had chosen to reveal his Son in him that he might preach to the Gentiles. God guided him day by day. He spoke to him sometimes in trances, sometimes in dreams, sometimes in events, and sometimes in the impulses and inclinations of his heart. God was in him, working both to will and to work for his own good pleasure. Paul saw God everywhere. He is the great giver. "He gives to all life and breath and all things." He is the ruler of men. Nations belong to him, and are held in the grip of his purpose. "God has made of one every nation to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation. He is not far from each one of us." He is always revealing himself to men. He revealed himself in Hebrew prophets, and in Greek poets, and in the fruitful seasons, and in the ongoings of the material universe, and in the fulness of time he revealed himself in his Son Jesus Christ.

In all God's dealings with men, he himself takes the first step. He calls. He imparts to the heart

his spirit. He prompts man to pray. He helps man to get rid of sin. God offers the necessary sacrifice. "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us." God makes his abode in the human heart. His spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are his children. It is Christ in us who is the hope of glory. Everything in our possession is a divine gift. Grace and peace and power and love, all come to us from God. Paul's faith is in God. His hope is in God. His commission comes to him from God. This consciousness of God flows in a mighty stream underneath the surface of Paul's life. We can feel the rush of it even when it does not break into view. Paul is mighty in argument, but he is ready at any instant to drop his argument in order to sing a doxology. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past tracing out. Of him and through him and unto him are all things. To him be the glory forever." "Now unto the King Eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."

Because he is religious, he loves to pray. He is always speaking with God. His prayerfulness is one of the most conspicuous features of his character. No one can read the New Testament even casually without being impressed by the place which prayer held in his life. No controversy

has ever risen in regard to that. There are some things which lie beyond the reach of debate, and that is one of them. Paul was a man of prayer. Discrepancies between Paul's letters and the Book of Acts have been exploited, discrepancies in chronology and in the statement of historic facts, but there is no discrepancy between the character of the man who wrote the letters and the man whom Luke describes in the "Acts." In both Paul is a man of prayer. Luke tells how he kneeled down on the sand at Miletus and prayed with the elders of Ephesus, and how on leaving Tyre, he gathered the whole company about him and then kneeled down and prayed. In his letters he is always kneeling down and praying. Over his letters and over the Book of Acts might appropriately be written the inscription—"Behold he prays!" Differences between the Pastoral Epistles and the other ten have excited controversy, differences in vocabulary and phraseology and viewpoint, but no difference has been discovered in the writers' attitude to prayer. The man who wrote the Pastorals was as prayerful as was the man who wrote the letters to the Romans and to the Philippians. There are troublesome questions of criticism and puzzling questions of chronology which scholars are compelled to grapple with, but these questions do not touch Paul's practice of prayer. There is nothing more certain in the whole history of the Christian Church than

that the greatest of the Apostles was a man who spent much time in communion with God.

He was always praying. When he exhorted others to pray without ceasing, he was only urging them to follow his own example. He tells Timothy that he remembers him in his prayers night and day. He assures the Colossians—"We do not cease to pray and make request for you." He is always praying for himself, and he is always praying for others. His prayer for others rises like a fountain night and day. He is always praying for himself, and he is always carrying his congregations to the throne of grace. We can see what he was in the habit of praying for from a study of his letter to the Colossians. "We have never ceased to pray for you, asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and insight, so that you may lead a life that is worthy of the Lord, and give him entire satisfaction." To the Philippians he wrote: "It is my prayer that your love may be more and more rich in knowledge and all manner of insight, enabling you to have a sense of what is vital, so that you may be transparent and no harm to any one in view of the day of Christ, your life covered with that harvest of righteousness which Jesus Christ produces to the glory and the praise of God." Whether he prays for himself or for others, he always puts at the forefront of his petitions—"Thy Kingdom come

thy will be done." It is the glory of God and the advancement of his Kingdom which is the dominant desire in every prayer. His prayers were informal, intimate, spontaneous. To him prayer is filial communion with God. It is not a monologue but a dialogue. Man speaks and God speaks also. In his address to the Jerusalem mob, Paul relates his first prayer to Jesus—It was a simple question—"Who art thou, Lord?" and when the answer came, his second prayer was also a question—"Lord what will thou have me do?" He relates one of his prayers in the temple. It also was a part of a dialogue. He tells what the Lord said, and then what he himself said, and then again what the Lord said. Paul believed that God can and does speak to man, and that man can ascertain by direct contact with God, the divine will. Sometimes Paul did not speak at all in his praying. There are prayers without words. Sometimes the word—"Father," escaped from his lips, and he poured into language the desires of his soul. At other times he was dumb, his whole personality praying, God in him yearning and pleading with sighs that could find no verbal expression. Sometimes his communion was full of rapture, and his soul was flooded with a peace which surpassed all understanding.

In his prayers, Paul's personality stands out with vivid distinctness. All the traits of his character are illuminated, as it were, by a light from

above. His kindness, tenderness, unselfishness, loftiness, nobility, zeal, magnanimity, devotion, are disclosed in all their rare loveliness, and we catch invaluable glimpses of Paul's innermost soul. In his prayers we have a revelation from heaven.

Paul loved to talk about religion. His religious experience was to him the most precious and thrilling part of his life, and he took delight in narrating it to as many as were willing to listen. He told it even to the mob which wished to tear him to pieces. He rehearsed it in Cæsarea to the Roman Procurator and the Jewish King. That amazing experience was behind all he thought and wrote and did. It was there that God shone into his heart, and he saw the glory of God in the face of Jesus. From that hour, Paul never ceased to rejoice in talking about God. Whether he is speaking to peasants in Lystra or to philosophers in Athens, his favorite subject is God. "I belong to him and I serve him and I believe him"—so he proudly said to the men on board the wrecked vessel, and thus did he by his religion quiet hearts which were full of panic and bring back to life a hope that was dead.

To be like God was Paul's supreme ambition. Many a man has made it his chief ambition to flee from the wrath to come. Not so did Paul. He shows no fear of hell, and apparently took no interest in talking about it. Punishment holds an inconspicuous place in his writings. Many devout

men have made the bliss of the blessed their life-long quest. Paul did not seem to yearn for the joys of heaven. It is not happiness either in this world or the next which he longs for, but God-likeness. He wants to partake of the divine nature. His burning desire is to become a man full statured in God's sight. He has no other ambition than to be the kind of man which God had in his mind when God called him to be the servant of his Son. The goal of all his efforts is the winning of the prize of a character like unto the character of Christ. To know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering, and to be with him forever, that to Paul is heaven.

His work was religious—persuading men to become acquainted with God in Christ. His constant exhortation was, "We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." His work is accurately described in his words to the Colossians: "We proclaim Christ, admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man complete in Christ."

Out of Paul's religious experience came his theology. A man's theology is the intellectual interpretation of his spiritual experience, the explanation of what his heart has felt and known. Paul came to know God in a new way through Christ, and therefore Paul's theology is a Christ-

ology. The central word in his vocabulary is "Christ." He lives in Christ. He can do all things in Christ. It is Christ who lives in him. It is Christ with whom he longs to dwell forever. All of this came out of his experience near the Damascus gate. It was there that he saw Christ. He saw that Christ loved him. This awakened in him a passionate love for Christ. Old things passed away, all things became new. His whole nature was transformed. Love took the place of law. Liberty supplanted bondage. The spirit of a son took complete possession of him. A new power throbbed in him. The one who could do all this must be divine. God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself. Christ is the image of the invisible God. In Christ there dwells all the fulness of the godhead. If God is in Christ, then the death of Christ is not a sign of failure but of triumph. It seems weakness but it is the power of God. It appears foolishness, but it is the wisdom of God. It is by the cross of Christ that God is going to save the world.

Through Christ Paul came into a series of new experiences; he found himself in possession of peace, and power, of hope and love and joy. These must have a divine source. They must come from God. And therefore God is a God of peace and of power, of hope and love and joy. Because of the stream of comfort which flows through Paul's heart in the midst of all his tribu-

lations he knows that God is the God of all comfort. God is the father of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the God who must be interpreted to men. The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus must be considered parts of a vast plan. The world's experience must be explained in the light of this new conception of Deity. The ways of God with the Jews and with the Gentiles must be justified at the bar of human reason. Paul had to become a theologian because he had a rich religious experience and an alert and active mind. Some of his theological theories do not appeal to us, and some of his theological arguments seem weak. He had to use the language of the world he was living in. He had to meet the problems with what philosophical equipment he possessed. Because his training was what it was, and his presuppositions and conceptions were what they were, his theology took on a form which bore the stamp of a world which has passed away. Theology changes from age to age, but religion in its essence runs on forever. Theology is the dialect which the intellect makes use of in explaining to itself what the heart has experienced. What the heart feels in relation to God is religion. Paul's Biblical exegesis and his theories of the fall of Adam, and original sin, and election, and imputed righteousness may all pass away, but his religion will abide. His devotion to Christ, his certainty of acceptance with God, his assurance

of forgiveness, his experience of spiritual freedom, his enjoyment of peace and gladness, his bold confidence in ultimate victory for himself and for all mankind, his thanksgiving to God, his adoration of God, his surrender to God in Christ —these constitute an indestructible part of the spiritual wealth of the world, and will be reproduced in the experience of men through all generations.

Paul based morality on religious foundations. It is because God is what he is, that men ought to live as Jesus lived. "I beseech you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called." Men ought not to sin against their body, because their body is a temple of God. They ought to speak the truth, because they are members one of another. They ought to be generous in their giving, because Christ for their sake became poor. They should do nothing through faction or vainglory but in lowliness of mind, because Christ took the form of a servant and became obedient unto death. First the vision, then the task. First the truth, then the duty. First God, then an obedient life. Paul knows of no enduring morality except through religion.

Our age is not religious. The multitudes are

not thinking about God. They are interested in the cosmic forces and in natural law, but their personal relation to their Maker does not greatly concern them. They do not want to be bothered with God. God seems to be a needless hypothesis. The doctrine of evolution is attractive to many because it seems to get rid of God. There is a widespread desire to give God as little to do as possible. People nominally religious are in many cases not religious in their interior life. Organized religion is more and more philanthropic. Men work for the town with more zeal than they commune with God. Social activities give deeper satisfaction than worship. The consequences are known. Private prayer is widely discarded or endured as a ceremony which is wearisome. Public worship lacks emotional power. Hymns of adoration are cold on the lips, and prayers of thanksgiving do not spring spontaneously from the heart. The outstanding feature of the Church is its impotency in the field in which mighty works need to be done. Minor matters are attended to with success, but the great things are left unaccomplished. Class hatred, race prejudice, national antagonism—these are demons working havoc with the world's life, and the Church cannot cast them out. Demons of that sort are cast out only by religion. In large areas of society, morality is in a state of decadence, because the religious foundations have

crumbled. Only religion can save mankind from ruin. Religion is the one hope of the world. The present greatest need of humanity is religion. Only a religious man can inspire others to become religious. We need Paul. He was religious after a high and noble fashion. Human in every fiber of his being, he lived close both to God and to man, serving men in all ways which were open to him, heartening them by his faith, cheering them by his hope, quickening them by his love, because his life was hid with Christ in God.

XXV

HIS LOVABLENESS

XXV

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One question remains—was Paul lovable? We know he was able, clever, brilliant, but was he winsome? We concede he was a saint, but was he likable? Some saints are not agreeable. We acknowledge he had many virtues, but virtuous people are not always attractive. They bore us by their virtues. We confess he was a man of high principles, but men with high principles can be totally lacking in charm. We know he was strong, but was he beautiful? We are sure he was full of energy, but was he full of grace? We are confident he was brave, but was he lovely? There is no doubt he was great, but so also was Napoleon I. great, and we hate him. Thomas Aquinas and John Calvin were great, but who cares for them? He was interesting, even fascinating, but can we give him our heart? Would you like him if you saw him? Would you want to be where he was? Would the room seem different if he came into it? When he left you, would the sunshine seem less bright? Would

you look forward with eager heart to seeing him again?

The artists have not greatly helped us to love Paul. Some one who is familiar with the whole realm of Christian art has said that among all the representations of Paul, there is not one on which the imagination can rest with satisfaction. His portrait is not often found on the walls of Christian homes.

The scholars on the whole have not helped us to love him. They have presented him as a logician, and logic is cold as ice. They have taught us to think of him as a dogmatist, always contending for his favorite dogma of justification by faith, and dogmatists are not magnetic. They have painted him as mighty in argument and controversy, with the result that we think of him as an intellectual warrior, a theological wrestler, a strenuous gladiator of Christ. They have said so much about him as a thinker, that we instinctively look up to him as one belonging to another sphere. He stands upon a lofty pedestal, and we gaze upon him with admiration. He is in the calendar of the saints, and we revere him. He is in the books of the scholars, and we speak his name with veneration. We bow low to him, and pass on. It is doubtful if any class of persons in our modern world have any genuine love for him. The boys and girls are not fond of him, nor do college students carry a copy of his letters in

their pocket, nor do men of business feel drawn to him, nor do housewives take delight in him, nor is he the idol of the millions who toil in factory and mill, mine and field, office and shop. He has never found a place among the world's popular heroes.

There are those who assert he was not lovable. They set him before us as the most unlovely of all the characters of early Christian history. They say he was egotistical and self-assertive—always talking about himself. They declare he was autocratic and domineering, always determined to have his own way. They assert he was jealous of the great Apostles, always carping at them and trying to undermine their authority. They accuse him of being harsh in his judgments and bitter in his language. They condemn him as a fanatic and bigot, unscrupulous in method and selfish in temper, a character not only without attraction but repulsive and detestable. These are things written in books, vouched for by men of reputed learning, and when the man in the pew falls in with one of these illustrious detractors of Paul, he is bewildered, not knowing what to think or say.

When one is listening to a man who claims to understand Paul, it is well to keep one's eyes on the Book of the Acts and the Pauline Epistles. No scholar knows any more about Paul than the New Testament tells him. Whatever unlovely

traits Paul possessed, are fully revealed in his letters. All other disagreeable features exploited in the books come out of the imagination of Paul's critics. The picture of Paul often exhibited is a mixture of assumption and inference. The real Paul is portrayed in the New Testament. No scholar of our time can get nearer to him than the text of the New Testament allows. The little book by Luke is worth more than all the books ever written in answering the question, whether Paul's personality was lovable or not. To Luke, Paul seemed altogether lovely, and Luke knew him. He was his traveling companion. He had been with him on land and sea. He had been his comrade in many a trying experience. He had worked by his side in evangelistic campaigns. He had eaten with him, talked with him, prayed with him, and walked with him hundreds of miles. What does any modern writer know of Paul compared with what Luke knew? Why should any one give heed to a modern German or Frenchman or Dutchman or Briton or American in preference to Luke? The man who contradicts Luke on any point touching Paul's personality, is not a man worth listening to. Luke was so devoted to Paul, that he was willing to share with him endless hardships and perils. He was glad to stay near him when Paul was in prison. He was eager to accompany him to Rome, even with Nero on the throne. To

Demas the world proved more attractive than Paul, but to Luke the whole world was as nothing compared with his friend. Luke was faithful to Paul to the end. This is the supreme test of love, loyalty till death. Luke tells us of other men who also were devoted to Paul. The Elders of Ephesus loved him with a love which neither words nor embraces nor tears could express. They had known Paul intimately and for years. They had received him into their homes and into their hearts. They could not say goodbye to him without weeping. The thought that they might never see him again took the sun out of the sky. The caricature sketched by a certain school of modern Biblical theorizers has no point of resemblance to the winsome and lovable man painted by Luke. If Paul was disagreeable and odious, how can we account for his influence? Why was Timothy willing to leave his home in Lystra and follow a comparative stranger, only God knew whither? Why were his mother and grandmother willing to have him go? Powerful must have been the charm of a man who could thus draw a youth away from his home, and launch him on such a perilous career. Timothy was only one of many who were won and held by the magic of Paul's personality. Silas left all and followed him. He was ready to follow him through dangers and imprisonments and floggings. With Paul by his side he could sing, even

in a jail with his feet fast in the stocks. Titus also was held in a love-grip which he could not escape. To minister to Paul was to him life and joy. No errand was too long or too difficult, and no burden was too heavy to bear. He was even willing to undertake the thankless task of attempting to bring the Cretans into subjection to Christ. Paul was not able to offer his assistants any earthly reward. Money had he none. Positions of honor were not his to give. Comfort and ease he could not offer. Even life itself he could not promise. A quarrelsome and censorious egotist cannot get men to work for him on such terms. These men must have fallen in love with Paul. There is no other explanation of their conduct. We are ready to do anything, no matter how hard, for those we love. The disciples of Jesus were not daunted by the direful things he said awaited them because of their great love for him. The disciples of Paul were ready to go with him to prison and death because they loved him so. Prisca and Aquila were not the only ones who risked their necks for his sake. The Galatians were not the only people who would have dug out their eyes to give him. The Philippians were not the only ones who followed him with loving thoughts in all his tribulations and labors. A censorious and unscrupulous autocrat cannot awaken devotion like that. Those who today disparage him are prejudiced pe-

dants, perverse theorists, who are ignorant of psychology and reckless in their scorn of facts. The New Testament makes it clear to all who have eyes to see, that Paul was a man of extraordinary attractiveness to those who had the best opportunity of becoming acquainted with him. It was true then as it is now, that men disliked him because they did not know him.

If he is worthy of our love, it is important that we should love him. If we do not love him, we are the losers. Not until we love him can he do for us what he is able to do. It is only the people whom we love who really enter into our lives. It is by loving men that we come to love God. Paul came to love God because he fell in love with Jesus. Many came to love Jesus because they fell in love with Paul. It was not the ideas of Jesus but Jesus himself who won Paul, and it was not the ideas of Paul but Paul himself who won Timothy and Titus and Silas and all the rest. It is not the doctrines of Paul but the man Paul who can help us most in doing our work and living our life.

The fact that he was loved is proof that he was lovable. If he had not been lovable, he would not have been loved. He made men love him simply by being himself. They could not help loving him, when once they knew him. He is as lovable now as he was then. He has a multitude of traits which woo the heart. He wins by his

candor. He is not seclusive or even reserved. He speaks out. He has the naiveté of a child. He blurts out whatever is in his heart. He is not ashamed to tell the whole story of his interior life. We like him because he is so human. He is surprisingly like ourselves. He is impulsive. He sometimes says more than he means. His feelings run away with him. He gets into trouble by his quick temper and his hasty speech. He has to apologize, repent, and start over. We cannot help being fond of him, because of his grit and pluck. He is always struggling with opposing circumstances, but he never succumbs. He may be disappointed, but he does not turn back. He may be discouraged, but he does not lie down. He may be unjustly treated, but he does not become sour. He may be knocked down, but he never surrenders. He is always ready to get up and push on.

We feel akin to him because he could become sarcastic, and, if pushed too far, could cover a man all over with blistering speech. There is enough of that in us to make us feel that Paul is our brother. He is good, but he is not too good for human nature's daily food. We like him because he could make a fool of himself. That seems to put him in our class. We enjoy the tone in which he says—"I am not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles." There are times when Paul felt he was just as good as anybody,

and he did not hesitate to say so. We have had the same feeling ourself, and we like him all the more because he is so thoroughly human.

We like him because of his cleverness in eluding his foes. We enjoy seeing him take to his heels. When we see him in that basket escaping from Damascus, we want to laugh. It seems absurd for a hero of the faith to be smuggled out of a city in a basket! When we see him slipping away in the darkness out of the city of Thessalonica, we forget he is a saint, he seems so much like a character in some modern novel. It is fine to see with what dexterity a theologian can run away from a mob. When he escapes from Berœa by a trick we are delighted. He pretended he was going East, but he suddenly started South, and it was only when he was out of their reach, that his enemies discovered how completely he had outwitted them. At a later time, he got ahead of a gang of assassins who had made all their plans to kill him. They were to kill him on a ship, but instead of going by water he went by land, and when they were ready to do their bloody work, they found that their victim was far away. Paul must have enjoyed these adventures himself. Why should not an inspired Apostle chuckle?

His sufferings endear him to us. When Othello told the story of his hardships, "of disastrous chances, and moving incidents by flood and field,

and hairbreadth escapes, and the distressful strokes that his youth suffered," Desdemona gave him for his pains a world of sighs and ended by falling in love with him. There is a Desdemona in us all, and we cannot hear Paul tell of his adventures and distresses without taking him into our heart of hearts. It is in his sufferings, that the soul of Paul shines in its brightest loveliness. It is when the furnace is the hottest, that he seems most like a son of God. It is when men are doing their worst that he is at his best. It is when human hate is fiercest, that his love is must conspicuously divine. We love him because he is able to surmount obstacles, and conquer difficulties, and vanquish his moods, and bear pain, and endure agony, and come off triumphant.

He had all the virtues and he possessed also all the graces. It is the gentler side of his nature which surprises us by its extent and loveliness. He was indeed a soldier, but his experience did not coarsen him, for the weapons of his warfare were not carnal. He was a fighter, but his fighting did not make him rough. He was at his best in the realm of courtesy. Of considerateness, he was a paragon. Tender and gracious, thoughtful and generous, noble and loyal, he was a gentleman trained and embellished in the school of Christ. There was nothing petty in him or mean, nothing underhanded or low, nothing ungenerous or spiteful. His impulses were noble, his

aims were high. Like his master he went about doing good. It was his ambition to help others. He made himself of no reputation. He took upon him the form of a servant. He became obedient unto death. And so God has highly exalted him, and given him a name which will shine like the stars forever.

Paul was one of the greatest lovers of all time. His crowning gift was his capacity for love. His highest joy was derived from loving. Emerson says that all mankind loves a lover. How then can we help loving Paul? He loved and he wanted to be loved. It was not enough for him to be understood. He craved love. It did not satisfy him to be respected, or admired, or revered. He could be satisfied only with love. All he pleaded for was love. Thus far he has been considered by the majority of Christians as a man to be understood. To understand him has been the ambition of those who have given him most attention. Men have prided themselves on their ability to understand him. But to understand him is not enough. He is a man to be loved. It is one of the tragedies of history, that he has been loved so little. His tomb is beneath St. Paul's without the walls, and some one has truly said that even unto this day the man remains "outside the walls." The Church has not yet taken him in. The individual Christian allows him to remain outside his heart. But like

his Master, he stands at the door and knocks. What he said to the Corinthians, he says to us —"I seek not yours but you. I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls." The question which he addressed to the Corinthians, he addresses also to us—"If I love you more abundantly, am I loved the less?" His appeal to the Corinthians is the appeal which he makes through all the generations—"My heart is wide open for you—open your hearts wide to me!"

XXVI

HIS GREATNESS

XXVI

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It is difficult to define greatness, but we can easily recognize a great man when we see one. We have no trouble in seeing that Shakespeare is a great poet, and that Angelo is a great architect, and that Raphael is a great painter, and that Mozart is a great musician, and that Pasteur is a great scientist, and that Gladstone is a great statesman, and that Napoleon is a great general, nor do we hesitate to say that Paul is a great man. He is the only man in the New Testament, except Jesus, whom we would immediately enroll among the great.

That he was an extraordinary personality is proved by the commotion he stirred up in his own lifetime. The finest testimony to his phenomenal force recorded in the New Testament, is what the Thessalonians said about him and Silas. They said they were men who "turned the whole world upside down." It was Paul and not Silas who brought against them this serious arraignment. No one ever accused Silas of upsetting the world when Silas was alone. Paul was the

upsetter. Barnabas was once taken for a god, but it was when he was a companion of Paul. He was never suspected of being a god after he left Paul's side. It was the personality of Paul and not of Barnabas which made the people of Lystra feel that they were entertaining visitors from heaven. The only bonfire mentioned in the New Testament is the bonfire in Ephesus. It was kindled by Paul. Ten thousand dollars' worth of books were burned up by their owners who had outgrown them, because of the teaching of the Apostle. He kindled conflagrations wherever he went. He filled synagogues with commotion, and set cities blazing. He stirred up riots, and drove mobs frantic. In Athens the philosophers gathered round him. On shipboard, in time of storm, he overtopped the Captain. It was in the city in which he preached, that the followers of Jesus were first called Christians. It was through him more than any other man that Antioch supplanted Jerusalem as the capital of the Christian world. Jerusalem with Peter, James and John in it was no match for Antioch as long as Paul was there. It was from Antioch, and not from Jerusalem, that messengers went forth to win the world for Christ. By the vigor of his faith, the intensity of his devotion, the fulness of his sacrifice, the passion of his enthusiasm, and the scope of his achievement, he cast all other Apostles and Prophets and Pastors and Teachers

into the shade, and became the central figure of the Christian world.

After his death, Paul did not become less, but more. Death added new cubits to his stature. He began to mould men more and more through his writings. The New Testament is a witness to his greatness. He wrote a quarter of it, and a Gentile physician whom he mightily influenced, wrote another quarter of it. More than one-half of the New Testament is due to Paul. Who decided that thirteen letters of Paul should be admitted into the New Testament canon? Not Paul himself, or any of Paul's friends. It was not settled in Paul's lifetime, but long after his death. It was not decided by any one man, nor by any group of men, nor by any one church, nor by any special group of churches. It was not decided on any one day in any one year, nor in any decade of years. It was a decision arrived at slowly and deliberately and impartially by the unfettered operation of many minds extended through a long series of years. It was not the decision of any church synod or council, of any high ecclesiastical official or hierarchy of officials, but the mature and reasoned judgment of the whole Christian people. There came about in the course of a hundred years, a general consensus of feeling that thirteen of Paul's letters deserved a place among the writings to be made use of in Christian congregations. They won

their place by the sheer force of their merit. They were chosen because they were worthy. They survived because they were fit. Multitudes of documents were written by Christian writers within the first hundred years after the death of Jesus, but only twenty-seven of them found their way into general acceptance among Christian believers. Out of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of letters only twenty-one were given a place in the collection generally used in the churches, and all but eight of the twenty-one were written by Paul. This is astonishing when one remembers that there were eleven men who apparently had a better right to contribute to the volume of Holy Scripture to be used by the Christian congregations than Paul. Peter especially had every external advantage over Paul. He was one of the original Twelve, and the foremost member of that immortal company. He was one of the three most intimate friends of Jesus. He had been with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, and also in the Garden of Gethsemane on the last night. Jesus had given him a significant name, and tradition declared that to him Jesus had entrusted the keys of the Kingdom of heaven. Paul on the other hand had never known Jesus. He was converted late, and had a bad record to live down. Up to the day of his death, he was hated by some, suspected by many, and disparaged by not a few. But notwithstanding all these

handicaps, Paul forged steadily to the front. By the mass of his personality, he won a place above all others. The New Testament is an imperishable monument of his greatness. Peter probably wrote many letters, but only two bearing his name succeeded in getting into the New Testament. Both these letters together do not equal in length one-half of Paul's letter to the Romans. Both are inferior to the writings of Paul. Even John the Beloved was inferior as a letter writer to Paul. Only one of his letters and two brief notes were counted worthy of a place in the New Testament by generations of Christian believers, who had many reasons for placing John above Paul. The fact is indisputable that Paul understood the mind of Jesus better than did any of the Twelve, that he not only better understood the content of the Christian message, but was better able to interpret it in such a way as to make it a living force in the hearts and homes of men. To Paul, therefore, has been committed the glorious privilege of sitting on the highest of the thrones, instructing to the end of time, all the tribes of the Israel of God.

What the second century did, the twentieth century is doing likewise. It is giving the supreme place to Paul. Of making books about Paul there is no end. More than all the other characters of the New Testament, he provokes the modern mind to action. More books have

been written about him within the last fifty years than about all the other apostles combined. When Barnabas and Paul went out on their first missionary journey, men said—"Barnabas and Paul," but after they had worked together for a season, men said—"Paul and Barnabas." When Peter and Paul entered on their great work of persuading men to accept Christ, the world invariably put Peter first and Paul second. At the end of sixty generations, it is Paul who stands first and Peter second. Time is a sure test of greatness. The farther we get away from Paul, the taller he looms. We know him better than did any of his contemporaries. We see how he dwarfs all the men of his generation, and also all the men of the generations which immediately followed. The subapostolic fathers, Clement of Rome and Ignatius, Papias and Polycarp and Justin Martyr, all are pygmies compared with him. Clement of Alexandria, and Irenæus, Tertullian, and Cyprian, were able and devoted men, but they do not belong to Paul's class. The ages have produced a great company of thinkers and heroes, of saints and martyrs, but not one of them has been able to write his name above the name of Paul. He has never been greater than now. He is perennially interesting, because he is so alive. His hot soul communicates its heat to us across the chilling waste of nearly two thousand years. His words, as Luther said, have hands and feet.

He takes hold of us and will not let us go. When he speaks to us, mysterious powers awaken in us. He quickens us, kindles us, arouses us to aspire and dream. We have to reckon with him as a world force. He is a potent factor in social evolution. He is one of the determining influences in our Western Civilization. The prints of his fingers are on our institutions. His ethical ideals stand in the market place. His ideas are running in our blood. He has woven himself into the fiber of our consciences and conduct. We are influenced by him even when we are least conscious of him. He has determined the history of Europe for two thousand years. The whole world would today be different had Saul of Tarsus never lived.

He was great in mind. His intellectual equipment was superb. He saw with extraordinary clearness. His breadth of vision was unprecedented. He also saw deeply. His eyes pierced to the center. He had insight into the soul of things. He could unerringly separate the incidental from the essential, the temporal from the timeless. He saw the meaning of Christianity, he saw the universality of the Gospel, he saw the greatness of the Church.

His heart was as wonderful as his brain. There was room in it for all mankind. He folded his sympathies around the nations, and his affection went out to the ends of the earth.

He was great in his will-power. The tenacity of his resolution could not be broken. He took bold and decisive steps at critical junctures, and never receded from a position that ought to have been held.

He had a great soul. He was free from the curse of pettiness. His spirit was intense and passionate. His devotion was unparalleled, and his capacity for sacrifice had no bounds. In his ways of looking at things and dealing with them, in his patience with people and planning for them, he had that largeness which only the truly great possess.

He was great in his aims and his plans. There was nothing small in his ambitions. He had in him the spirit of a world conqueror. He was far greater than Alexander the Great. He was always dreaming of other worlds to conquer. Nothing less than the whole world for Christ would satisfy his heart. He carried in his eye Rome, the center of the world, and Spain, the end of it. In his imagination, he could see every knee bending, and every tongue confessing that Jesus is Master indeed.

Great in his character, he is equally great in his achievements. He is the Christian Hercules, and his labors are so varied and wonderful, that we sometimes lose the man in the blaze of the glory of the things he accomplished. It was he who lifted the Christian religion out of its Pales-

tinian cradle, tore away its swaddling clothes, and trained it to walk along the highways of the Roman Empire. It was he who clipped the shell, and set the imprisoned eagle free. It was he who lit the first Christian lamp in the palace of the Cæsars. It was he who converted a Jewish sect into a world religion. It was he who saw Jesus not simply as a Jewish Messiah, but as the divine Saviour of all mankind. It was he who placed the cross of Jesus at the center of human history, and also at the center of the universe. It was he who broke down the wall of separation between the Jew and the Gentile, and gathered all men into one family of God. It was he who changed the religious atmosphere of the world. That atmosphere was charged with legalism and ceremonialism, and he, like a thunderstorm, came sweeping across the world, and by the flashes of lightning from his hot soul, he changed the air forever. It was he who put the words upon men's lips, which one hears today in every Christian land, and in every foreign missionary station. He coined phrases with which Christian men still are praying. He created a vocabulary which theologians have made use of down to the present hour. He framed sentences so freighted with consolation and hope, that none better even now can be found to read beside the open grave. He penned paragraphs so beautiful and with such healing in them, that they will be read in the pub-

lic worship of Christian congregations to the last day. He is the only man in history, who has written words on a level with the words of Jesus. In the great crises of our life, we can pass from the words of Jesus to the words of Paul, without feeling we are coming down. When we read the highest paragraphs in the greatest of his letters, we find it easy to believe that men can be inspired by God.

His greatness is seen again in the universality of his appeal. He attracts and satisfies widely differing types of men. He has been the patron saint in monasteries, and mystics have claimed him as a brother. Puritans have placed themselves under his banner, feeling that he is the greatest of all Puritans. High church men have found in him one of their boldest defenders, and Quakers have loved him because of his emphasis on the light within. Apocalyptists have found in his letters the food which their souls craved, and practical reformers who care nothing for Apocalypses have been sure he stood by their side. Missionaries have seen him going on before them, heartening them by his intrepid example, and invalids, shut in from the world, have found him by their bedside making it easier to endure. The theological mind has reveled in his reasonings and theorizings, and the ethical culturist has confidently quoted him as a master in the realm of duty. Reactionaries and worshipers of the *status*

quo have fallen back on him for authoritative permission to remain where they were, and progressives and radicals have always heard him urging them to push forward. Often has he been called the "Apostle of Progress." He was so great that he could assimilate all that was best in the thought of his age, and appropriate for his own uses whatsoever was lovely and of good report. He gathered all the wisdom of his time into the service of Christ. It is because he is so rich in his humanity, and so wealthy in ideas, that every one can find in him whatsoever he needs. Because of his greatness he becomes all things to all men.

We can judge of his greatness by the great men who have kindled their torch at his fire. It was he who converted Augustine and made him the greatest of all the theologians. It was he who broke the chains of Luther and made him the greatest of all the Reformers. It was he who kindled the heart of Wesley and made him the greatest of all the Evangelists. Augustine, Luther, Wesley, are the three most potent personalities which the Church from the age of the Apostles to the twentieth century has produced, all three of them giants, and all three aroused and made mighty by a giant greater than them all —Saul of Tarsus. He has an amazing genius for creating a soul under the ribs of death. His words, when taken into the heart, introduce

golden ages. When he is forgotten, the world grows dark. There is always a revival when the Church goes back to him. Whenever the religion of law has crowded out the religion of freedom, or the religion of form has smothered the religion of the spirit, it is Paul who like Elisha has thrown himself on the dead body of the Church, restoring it to life again. He fans into flame the slumbering fires of devotion. He stirs the spirit of liberty in hearts which are slipping back into old bondages. His letters are leaves of the tree of life which are for the healing of the nations.

So great is he that some have made him mightier than he is. For hundreds of years, he was given credit for writing the Letter to the Hebrews. Today he is assumed to have shaped the theology of the Fourth Gospel. Some have thought they have found Paulinism even in the Synoptics. The entire New Testament, it is claimed, bears the impress of Paul's mind. Some have gone so far as to assert that Paul is the real founder of the Christian religion. They contend that had it not been for him, there would today be no Christianity. Others are content to call Paul the second founder of the Christian Religion, the originator of ecclesiastical Christianity, the organizer of the Church. By some he is unduly exalted. Without him, they say Christianity is incomplete. The full Christian message is not to be found in the Gospels, but only in the Epis-

tles. One cannot know what Christianity is until he sits at the feet of Paul. To Luther, the Letter to the Romans was the chief book of the New Testament. The Reformation was the work not of the Gospels but of Galatians and Romans. Others confess his controlling influence, and condemn him. He has perverted, they say, and degraded the religion of Jesus. He has weighted Christianity down with a theology which makes it a burden. He has darkened the world by getting in between mankind and Jesus. He is the corrupter of Christianity, and when men cry "Back to Jesus," their aim is to get rid of Paul. A man must be great indeed who can so impress the imagination as to lead men sixty generations after his death, to exalt him above the head even of Jesus of Nazareth, ascribing to him a power over the human mind and heart not equaled by that of the Master whose slave Paul claimed to be. He is indeed Paul the Great. His name is above every name except the name of Jesus. Like his Master he was great because he was the servant of all. John Chrysostom wrote a memorable sentence when he said of Paul—"Three cubits in stature, he touched the sky."

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